

This Old House

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Give your plain-Jane cabinets a dash of vintage style by installing decorative grilles on the doors.

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— Bob Villa

If only my reality were a TV show

Another day goes by, another year I don't have my remodel finished. It'd be funny if it weren't happening to me—or if the reason my latest contractor hobbled into the sunset weren't to have his foot surpassed.

But it is happening to me, and the contractor does have a very real and life-shattering medical problem, which, of course, only makes the situation that much more...complicated.

Yet, however knotty things become, blue painter's tape—no matter how long it's on my walls—does not become artwork. The missing piece of molding I don't notice after three years is still seen as missing by first-time visitors. And using a pair of Vice-Grips to turn the shower on and off while waiting for the valve to be installed, though creative, eventually gets rusty.

It's enough to make you realize how fortunate you are. Or when a missing has been visited upon the families who appear on the *This Old House* television program. In fact, you end up in awe of the lack of drama and excess of professionalism that Tom Silva and his crew exhibit in finishing the remodel of a whole house in just the few short months of a TV season. There's no better example of that than the photos in "Go for the Gold," the big wrap-up story we've got of the show's latest project. You'll find it on page 63. You know what I see when I look at those pictures? I see a sign that says, *I should be an idiot.*

Now don't get me wrong, on the inside my place looks (mostly) pretty good, if you can overlook the examples above. It's the outside that's all the real problem. Sure, it's weathered and doesn't appear totally condemned, but the sidewalk is broken, the wrought-iron stair railing needs paint, and the hatches need repainting. Remodel agency only goes so far—in our case only to just inside the front door—before it runs out, so the house looks what you enter a space like to call curb appeal. At least anything like the houses we're featuring in "Be the Best on Your Block," on page 76. Check them out. I'm gonna get to work on my own exterior as soon as I have my third—or is it fourth? or is it fifth?—contractor...

Scott O'Connell
SCOTT O'CONNELL, EDITOR
scott@thisoldhouse.com

letter [from This Old House]



3 THINGS I LEARNED FROM THIS ISSUE

1. How a smear of toothpaste can help you stay sane when remodeling. [p. 10]
2. How to turn sea salt and lemon into a lustrous black-and-white stain. [p. 44]
3. How wearing a cool pair of shades can tell you if your lawn needs a drink. [p. 93]

readermail

Our recent issues seemed to inspire TGH readers to sit down and share their thoughts and latest accomplishments with us. Below, a sampling: a horsewoman who finds being stuck indoors all winter a great opportunity to update interiors; an astute safety reminder; and a colorful Reader Project from the handier half of an Arkansas couple.

Indoor inspiration

My life revolves around riding my horse outdoors, so with the snow and cold weather, I can get pretty cranky about being in hibernation in the house. Your magazine has changed all that! The information is inspirational, easy to read, practical, and affordable. We have a 1920s farmhouse that needs extensive redecorating, and reading your magazine has made me switch gears to want to spend time indoors for a while. I also appreciate that your magazine appeals to

me as a female reader with projects and ideas that are within my grasp (I'm not very handy, but I do like to paint), not just the ones I will hand off to my husband to keep him busy in his workshop over the winter. By offering so many links to your website for further information, you make even the short pieces exceptional in value.

So thank you, and I renewed my husband's subscription. (Sneak!—it's really for me!)

—KAREN DALLMORE,
OTTAWA, ONTARIO, CANADA



Painted wainscot

REDECORATING, PORT SMITH, NY

I have been an avid TGH reader for years. I save the pages when I see an idea or a project that I think will work well for our 2009 farmhouse. Here's my most recent project, our dining room. I did all the work myself! As my husband is not handy with paint or tools. My next project will hopefully be the kitchen—soon, when I mention this to my husband, his eyes glaze over....



Cable clarification

Some great tips were provided in "30 Downs and Dirty Tricks for Big DOY Savings" (December 2010). However, I believe you need to clarify trick/tip number 15, "Install and hide cable lines." I am a certified fire protection specialist and have been an insurance loss prevention specialist as well as a volunteer firefighter for over 40 years. I hope you did not mean that electrical cables, extension cords, or anything electrical can be run under the carpet. This is an extremely hazardous practice, as the cords or cables can become worn and overheated, even if rated for the appliance they are attached to.

—BRIAN JAMES, DPE, MAIA

The editors reply: Our tip was meant for dimmable telephone lines, not electrical wiring or cords, but your point is worth emphasizing. Risk: Thank!

Corrections

✦ The actual product information for the tin ceiling shown on page 96, November 2010, is 2 by 2 foot aluminum field panels in #2410 Butler by Noellepoint pattern #2400 Hammered filler in mill finish #UCQ400 Dushess cornice in mill finish. M-Boss: www.mbossinc.com

how to reach us

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Edited by Jessica Dodioli-Pecher

inside

SURPRISE CLEANERS

10 USES

TOUGH WORK BOOTS

MORE



4 SMART IDEA

Screened-in cabinet

Imitating the vintage charm of old end-uses covers and pin sales, decorative grilles offer the perfect way to punch up plain cabinet doors. When installed in a bathroom, they're also highly functional. Here, the screens help obscure towels and toiletries while allowing air to circulate.

Inspired to install your own grille? First, consider your cabinet doors. If you have glass panes, as the homeowner of this bath did, you can pin-up them out, if you have wood, you'll need to use a counter to cut away the panel, working from the back of the door. Then simply insert the grille, securing it with strips made from small strips of wood or run buttons. You'll end up with a cabinet that's as eye-catching as it is useful.

A not choice: brushed aluminum grille with wooden counter and pinners.
30 cents per square inch.
steelcitycabinets.com

PHOTO: THOMAS J. JORDAN/ISTOCKPHOTO.COM; STYLING: JESSICA PETERSON



↑ In high humidity spaces, opt for lightweight aluminum grilles which won't rust.

ceramic tile

Every tile project seems to result in leftover squares, shards, and odd off-cuts. Before you turn to the trash, consider these smart ways to reuse them.

1 Line shelves.

Lay tiles flat on a wall to create a solid surface for small items that could otherwise slip through the openings.

2 Refresh a tabletop.

Bundle tiles of various colors in a fabric bag and use a hammer to break them into small pieces. Spread inside a tabletop, arrange the shards, let set, then grout between the tiles to create a mosaic.



3 Display your address.

Using stencil or an oil-based exterior paint, mark brightly hued tiles with your address numbers and cement them to an entry door.

5 Design a pattern.

Use the tile as a template for a checkerboard floor motif. Lay two rows and paint the squares alternating colors.

6 Create a portable work surface.

Insert the lip of a bar glue gun on a tile to protect your table and floor from drips.

7 Use as a trivet.

Use a full piece or small squares of cork to the underside of a table that's large enough to hold under a hot pot or dish.

8 Make a memo pad.

Lay large tile next to the phone or on your desk. Use dry-erase marker to jot down messages or to do lists that you can wipe away when you're done.

9 Edge a plant bed.

Glue tiles to create a border around a cedar bed using



construction adhesive.bury the wood around a plot so that just the tiles stick out to create a border that doubles as a low-lying guard.

10 Keep counters clean.

Set a tile next to the stove as a landing spot for dirty cooking utensils.

11 Mark plants.

Create tags by writing on small tiles with a permanent marker. To reuse, wipe with nail polish remover.

—ANNE H. STAMPSON

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STORAGE

Outdoor built-in

Need extra storage but don't have the room? Budget-friendly idea: Consider building a cabinet like TDI reader Lynn Boughton did in her Brooklyn, Michigan, home. "I wanted a place for gardening supplies that also hid the ugly wheelbarrow and exposed hoses outside, so I built a 'shoe closet,'" she says. She enclosed the space with a legroom-height, tongue-and-groove siding. The curved doors are painted to accommodate the garden hose, while shallow upper cabinets house wire shelves for small tools. Repurpose old tires as wheel stops, as a final touch. Boughton coated the doors with Benjamin Moore's Royal Flush, an earthy green, and added square-shaped door pulls bought for a few dollars. The project cost her less than \$200 and took a week—and saved a lot of space.

Outdoor detail like this cabinet will be part of the design with a green wall.



HOW TO

Sharpen a shovel

Car through soil and roots with less effort by keeping digging tools like your spade shovel sharp. First, clamp the shovel to a workbench so that the convex side of the blade faces up. Wearing heavy gloves and holding a mill board file, push it upward along the edge of the blade. Lift the angle. Follow the original bend; if it has worn off, file the file at a 45-degree angle from the shovel's face. Once the blade looks sharp, flip the shovel over and make a few passes with the file to remove the resulting burr on the underside. —SAL VUOLTA

GRIME-BUSTERS

Surprise spring cleaners

Vinegar and baking soda aren't the only pantry items you can use in your fight against household dirt. Check out these four other ways to clean with items you may already have around the house.

—NATALIE MOSQUERA



Rusty wipes

Eliminate dust and dirt from antique furniture without marling fine finishes by rubbing with gentle fragrance-free wipes.



Oven cleaner

Dissolve dirt stains on a white enamel-coated cast-iron tub with a coat of oven cleaner. Let sit for an hour or two then scrub with steel wool.



Ketchup

Polish away rusty or dull spots in a copper sink by wiping on this condiment, which acts as a mild acid, and sprouting steam.



Nail polish remover

Wipe everything from paint splatters to ink stains from furniture doors by adding a few drops of an acetone formula to a rag and spot cleaning.



GARDENING

Wildflowers for quick color

Give your yard a push-over by planting wildflowers. Notoriously easy to grow, these blooms can adapt to a variety of soils, need only a little sun and occasional watering, and often flower as soon as five weeks. To make things even easier, opt for a germinated selection of seeds native to your area. *American Meadows* (americanmeadows.com), *Seedland* (seedland.com), and *Yonahgual* (my.com/shop/yonahgual) offer budget-friendly blends of annuals, biennials, and perennials for improving garden from California to Connecticut. —LIZ

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New classic

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Which wood glue where

If you've ever been stuck when it comes to choosing the right adhesive for a woodworker, you know how confusing all the options can be. There are glue that dry instantly, glue that must be mixed with water, glues that should never touch water, glues that work only at certain temperatures—add to that! here on top, you're likely won't find. To help, we've rounded up some common-sense situations and their glue solutions, all of which deserve a spot in your toolbox. —G.E.

Cracked sawyer

Glue to use: Yellow polyurethane (PVA)

A step-up in strength from white craft glue (another PVA), this water-based adhesive creates a strong wood-to-wood bond.

How to tip: Glue both surfaces and clamp them together for at least 30 minutes. Use a full strength in 24 hours. If the saw cracks again immediately with a clamp down.

One to try: Gorilla's Carpenter's Wood Glue \$4 for 8 ounces, stores.com

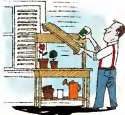
Joists on grain-sided molding

Glue to use: Stainable PVA

This glue has the same formula as yellow PVA, with the addition of wood fibers. The result is a beige paste that accepts stain.

How to tip: First, test how well the glue accepts the stain with a scrap wood. Then apply a one coat of the stain and press the edges together, securing them with clamps or finishing nails for 24 hours. The glue will cure to full strength in 72 hours.

One to try: Gorilla's Carpenter's Wood Glue \$4 for 8 ounces, stores.com



Rusted potting-bench shelf

Glue to use: Water-resistant PVA. This product is similar to other yellow PVAs but it repels water, so it works well for light outdoor uses. In most cases it's also effective that the wood around the glue will rot or crack before the glue fails.

How to tip: Apply a heavy bevel on one side, then clamp for 30 minutes. Lower the joint down for 24 hours with the glue cured.

One to try: Timber-Bond II Ultimate \$17 for 8 ounces, mason.com

Loose chair seat

Glue to use: Polyurethane. This adhesive sticks to wood, metal, and even old glue. When exposed to water, it expands to fill cracks, reducing the weight of the chair seat.

How to tip: Wearing gloves, lightly dampen one side of the project. Then add a thin layer of glue to the other side, clamp for 30 minutes. Clean up spills with paint thinner.

One to try: Gorilla's Polyurethane Glue \$12 for 8 ounces, homedepot.com



Spattered fence picket

Glue to use: Two-part epoxy. Works by hardening in an air and shrinking. This all-in-tough glue sets in about 5 minutes. No matted grout, end results will be smooth solvents.

How to tip: Using the glue, dab into the hole of the picket. Use a small amount of the glue to fill the hole. Use a small amount of the glue to fill the hole.

One to try: Loctite Epoxy Quick-Fix \$4 for 0.25 ounces, homedepot.com



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- Nausea, vomiting, or stomach pain.
- Brown or dark-colored urine.
- Feeling more tired than usual.
- Your skin and the whites of your eyes turn yellow.
- Allergic skin reactions.

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- Muscle and joint pain
- Upset stomach
- Changes in some blood tests

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Dos

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INTERIOR • EXTERIOR

before + after:
kitchen

Period style, up-to-date function

Recreating a kitchen allows for more space and light, attention to detail gives it an inviting vintage look. by DEBORAH DOLAN - Photographs by ALLEX HATCHER

When two people undertake a major redo, some negotiating is required. Vance Martin and Andrea Chen, owners of a 1909 house in Seattle, shared a vision of a colorful kitchen opening onto a porch. Each wanted a wood floor and cabinets with clear glass fronts, while she wanted no-flux flooring and less transparency. They compromised with pale linoleum and seeded glass. Working with designer Kara Clements, they negotiated other challenges, too, including the missing joist beam while peeling under the floor. When a wall came down—as part of the scheme to have the kitchen and the family room trade places—Clements realized ceiling beams had to go back up in a connecting old-house way. Details like arches mirrored to match ones on the porch also make the new space “feel like it has a heritage,” she says—with amenities, of course, including a gas line threaded outside to feed Vance’s grill. The redo’s success reflects “a great partnership,” he says, and, on that, the whole family agrees.

before The couple had very low ceilings, the range and the fridge abutted. There was no room for the kitchen to grow and more family-friendly. From left: Lily, then 16; Abby, 17; Andrea and Vance.



(before)



Cabinet tops provide an display space for colorful vintage bottles.

before+after: kitchen

▲ The existing range and hood are now complemented by a stainless steel backsplash, wrap-around cabinets, and cabinets neatly finished with a shabby-chic and wood-grain panels.

▲ The ornamented arch over the eating nook repeats porch details and frames a view of the dining room's ceiling and ceiling. (Paint: GCH Paint's Almost Purple [wall] and Tapered [ceiling]. Roof: Cream & Deep Blue [sheds].)



before

At 140 square feet, the kitchen had room for a table but lacked storage, prep space, and style.



after

Redesigned, expanded to 260 square feet, and joined to a porch, the space is warmer and big enough for an eating nook, an island—and plenty of family and friends.

▲ Added crownline windows, a shag glass door, and a row of load-bearing beams to bring in lots of light, even in winter.

1 Swapped planks with the family room and moved part of the hall to gain light, space and porch access.

2 Placed an island in the center for food prep and unobstructed.



4 Flashed the range with crownline and cabinets for lots more storage and prep space.

5 Built in an eating nook, a party and a night line for the new living room for better flow and function.

Photo: Jeffery M. Smith



▲ A magnetic chalkboard near the entry for the family's more convenient cuttable pad and message center. May also chalkboard with Supply Light (sheds). Restoration Floor (porch). Marmolam.

▲ CO-ribbed bronze Magna Island, and pulls make 2500A kitchen upgrade technology the kitchen's look. Restoration Floor (GCH Paint's Champagne Copper cabinets). (sheds).



▲ The widest-topped island holds cookbooks, shelves on one side and a microwave on the other. (Paint: GCH Paint's Tapered [island] and Gallery [sheds]).



▲ A coffered ceiling was built by framing out and bracing beams for a Craftsman-style look.

show us your remodel

See photos, lists, or other remodeling tips and ideas in our monthly newsletter. For a free copy, visit www.thisoldhouse.com or your WH.

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The available survey data indicate that the 1991-1992 season was the most severe in the United States since 1963. The 1991-1992 season was the most severe in the United States since 1963. The 1991-1992 season was the most severe in the United States since 1963.

A bath remodel for only \$439

Creativity and four gallons of paint go a long way in transforming a makeshift space

by WYNNE BLOOMER/STYLIST • Photographs by ROBERTA SHERIDAN/ELLE

Even in long-haul remodels, some spaces cry out for prompt design attention. For Rachel Sherman of Boulder, Pennsylvania, that space was the first-floor bath. Located between a home office and the family room, it's the most trafficked of the 1927 farmhouse's three bedrooms and two powder rooms. But when Rachel, her husband, and their two daughters moved in, it opened into dry-wall and grouty carpeting.

Two years on, with a full ride-out of the quarter, Rachel decided to make the space "less embarrassing." Refinishing everything from the plywood subfloor to the original oak fixtures with paint, she updated the bath over four weekends with a gray-and-brown palette and low-cost touches, such as a three-light vanity fixture. "It was supposed to be a temporary fix, but I love it. And now we can focus our money on bigger projects," says Rachel. ■

before The bare-bones bath looked never finished to Rachel. Her clear goal? **after** The rug motif and white wall stripes tell a story about the new dwelling space. *Paint used: Benjamin Moore's Light Powder and Nimbus*



[before]



[detail]

• The painted floor delivers the look of tile at a fraction of the cost. After sanding and sealing the plywood subfloor (Bunnings), the owner used a porch paint and stencil to create the design. Three coats of polyurethane ensure it holds its named bath: Pearl Vantage 1. Jimmy and Benjamin Moore's Smoke Ember



[detail]

• Spray paint and lacquer updated the original 2006 vanity (\$100) for \$25, avoiding the need to replace the sink or shell out for costly top replacements.

how'd you save on a redo?

Instead of paying \$100 for a new vanity, we spray-painted and lacquered the existing one. That's how to make a small room your own.



the project tally:

- Removed the carpet \$0
- Primed and painted the ceiling, door and trim with cans left over from previous projects \$0
- Mounted a three-light fixture over the sink and flush-mount sconce above light on the ceiling \$20
- Painted the floor with an area rug design using two shades of primer, three coats of porch paint, stencil and gray paint \$40
- Sanded the floor with three coats of polyurethane \$15
- Created a striped wallpaper look with 2 gallons of paint \$52
- Hung an oval vanity mirror \$15
- Primed, painted and lacquered the existing vanity to look like an updated vanity \$25

total **\$439**



[detail]

• Extending the stripes over the shower walls adds a new element here to the existing style (\$100), while a simple stripe motif makes shower walls look like the design takes center stage.

Spring-loaded cabinet latches

Nostalgia for hardware with vintage style? These little latches will add a big dose of character to your cabinetry. By DANIELLE BILMUELL • Photographs by TONY MCKENNON

Whether you're due for a kitchen overhaul or your bath has just had a quick face-lift, adding latches is an easy way to inject a bit of period style. First appearing in Victorian-era kitchens as elaborately detailed brass or iron hardware with holes that usually slid into place, these cabinet-door catches were paired with equally ornate metal bar pulls. The Industrial Revolution brought spring-loaded mechanisms that allowed them to smoothly click into place with the push of a thumb. In the early 20th century, what we now consider the classic version—plain, nickel-plated, with an oval knob—came into vogue, and latches started venturing into virtually every room in the house.

Today's models cover the gamut of design and finishes, all sure to bring vintage charm to new and old projects alike. Just remember: For the two parts to make proper contact, a latch must be installed on inset doors that sit within a frame. Here, 10 of our favorites.



the classic

22-00000-0000

Made of: *Nickel-plated brass with a polished nickel finish*

Size: 2 1/4" W x 2 1/2" H

Try it: On upper cabinets with white flat-panel doors, the generous size, top-to-bottom shape also covers holes from previously installed knobs. \$30

rejuvenation.com



nickel-plated brass

22-00000-0000

Made of: *Cast brass with slight embossed finish*

Size: 2 1/4" W x 2 1/2" H

Try it: To add historic appeal to an oak hatch or pine corner cabinet with a wall-swing look. \$32

rejuvenation.com



black-painted brass

22-00000-0000

Made of: *Cast brass with white, oil-rubbed finish*

Size: 2 1/4" W x 2 1/2" H

Try it: As a classic finishing touch on a family room media cabinet or TV stand to, where its larger scale will look just right. \$30

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"To determine latch placement, make three tick marks to divide your cabinet into four equal parts, top to bottom. On upper cabinets, mount the latch on the lowest tick mark; for base units, close to the topmost tick mark."



thrown a curve

AMERICAN
Made of Cast brass with a polished nickel finish.
Size: 2 1/2" W x 1 1/2" H
Try it On painted cabinet doors where its curved shape would add an extra level of detail. \$38
americanstyleplus.com



warm touch

TOP CHOICE
Made of Forged brass with a textured powder finish.
Size: 2 1/4" x 2 1/4"
Try it On dark or shiny cabinets or on a rustic cupboard where its brushed finish will glow. \$20, hardware.com



neo-colonial

WAS DINE'S BEST CHOICE
Made of Cast brass with a black powder painted finish.
Size: 2 1/2" W x 2 1/2" H
Try it On simple cottage-style kitchen, especially where it won't add other weight to the hardware. \$22
wasdine.com



art in simplicity

RESTORATION HARDWARE
Made of Cast brass with a simple painted finish.
Size: 2 1/2" W x 1 1/2" H
Try it On light-colored but dark hardware, paired with brushed metal linens, pulls or the drawers. \$12
restorationhardware.com



fancy filigree

WAS DINE'S BEST CHOICE
Made of Cast brass with an engraved powder finish.
Size: 2 1/4" W x 1 1/4" H
Try it On vintage look kitchen with stamped tin ceiling, rustic paint and ultraclean cabinetry. \$10
westyle.com



leaf motif

WAS DINE'S BEST CHOICE
Made of Cast brass with an engraved finish.
Size: 2 1/4" W x 2 1/4" H
Try it On a contemporary to a rustic site or give sleek look. \$36
westyle.com



tapered toggle

CHOWN COTTAGEWARE
Made of Cast brass with a polished nickel finish.
Size: 2 1/2" W x 1 1/2" H
Try it As a hip, sleek accent on a vintage look medicine cabinet or dark with chrome fittings. \$40
chowncottage.com



well-aged

REUNION
Made of Forged brass with an antiqued burnished finish.
Size: 2 1/2" W x 1 1/2" H
Try it On country-style rule for you. Unfinished kitchen, the knob will become rich as the wood and paint between the knob's lines. \$25
reunioncove.com



brass beauty

RAMOND'S RESTORES
Made of Cast brass with a polished brass finish.
Size: 1 1/2" W x 1 1/2" H
Try it On classic white cabinets with shiny brass knobs and brass handles for extra style appeal. \$12
ramonds.com



two-for-one

CHOWN COTTAGEWARE
Made of Cast brass with a brass knob.
Size: 3 1/2" W x 2 1/4" H
Try it On a modern or contemporary cabinet where its simple and elegant look will make a statement. \$35
chowncottage.com



graceful shape

WORTHINGTON
Made of Cast brass with an engraved finish.
Size: 3" W x 2 1/4" H
Try it On a brass knob of a newly painted wood that will complement the knob's finish. \$12
worthington.com



rustlike inspired

HOUSE OF ANTIQUE
Made of Cast brass with an engraved powder finish.
Size: 2 1/4" W x 2 1/4" H
Try it On the T-bar sports brass handle, as well as a painted look with simple styling. \$18
houseofantiquehardware.com



well-rounded

CHOWN COTTAGEWARE
Made of Cast brass.
Size: 3" W x 2 1/4" H
Try it On a dark wood furniture piece where its polished rim and bright knob will pop. \$30
chowncottage.com

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\$40 off
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t & ball twist

CHOWN COTTAGEWARE
Made of Cast brass with a modern industrial look.
Size: 2 1/4" W x 2 1/4" H
Try it As a unique twist off a keypad cabinet on the kitchen island or a bathroom storage unit. \$300
chowncottage.com

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Shrub pruning dos and don'ts

Not sure how to shape up the shrubs in your yard? Here, proper pruning fixes for five common problems. *By SAI VASILIDA • Photography by KIRKDA-CLIFFORD*

If the thought of cutting one who looks like a perfectly happy plant makes you cringe, you're not alone. Even homeowners who know the benefits of pruning—better health, more pleasing buds, bigger flowers—are often still confused about exactly the right time and right way to make the cut, fearing they'll lop off next year's flowers, stunt the plant's growth, or kill it outright. But once you understand how plants respond to pruning, you'll realize how easy problems a well-placed cut can solve.

The first step to successful pruning is timing is right. Sheds that flower on new wood, or branches that form in spring and flower in summer—rose of Sharon and summer wick are two—should be pruned after February or early March. This results in fewer but larger flowers the first year. "Pruning distributes the plant's stored energy among fewer flower buds so that the ones left behind get more to eat," explains horticulturalist Lee Ketch. Pruning spring-flowering shrubs right after they bloom, giving them the rest of the growing season to develop new branches and buds, leave them bloom on old wood, or increase growth. "But if you miss the ideal time to prune, you can always wait until the shrub's flowers brown out," says Ted Orlow, Home landscape contractor Roger Cook.

Successful pruning involves knowing two basic cuts. Take the path to learn how to use them to remedy common problems you encounter:

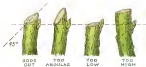


pro advice ROGER COOK, TDI LANDSCAPE CONTRACTOR

"To deal with a wayward evergreen branch, be sure to cut it back to the center of the shrub, where it meets another stem. If you just lop off the offending section, the cut stub will be obvious and unsightly."

got an outdoor space you're proud of?

thought about it as a rooming need to be a real place? then the answer is yes! TDI



1. Problem: You've inherited a sloppily chopped shrub.

Do make selective cuts to healen up a poorly pruned shrub by stimulating new growth where you want it and removing unwanted, less vigorous wood. Cuts heal more quickly when made at the right spot and at the correct angle with a sharp, clean tool. Find a branch with a bud facing the direction you want new growth to follow. Prune just above that bud at a 45-degree angle, with the lowest point of the cut furthest from the bud. **Don't** leave more than 1/4 inch of growth above the bud, as this can encourage rot. Cutting too low can cause the bud to dry out, and cutting at an angle greater than 45 degrees can create a large surface area that's slow to heal, inviting disease.



2. Problem: Your shrub has dense foliage at the top but looks lifeless inside.

Do open up the plant with thinning cuts. Just trimming back branch tips, either with manual pruners or electric shears, results in dense foliage at the top of a shrub and a tangle of weak, leafless branches at the center. Thinning cuts remove whole branches down to the base or take off large sections of branches back to a main stem, allowing light and air to reach the center of the plant and encouraging healthy new growth throughout. Remove the thickest, oldest wood first before moving to younger stems. **Don't** remove more than one-third of a plant's mass in a year, to keep it vigorous and looking good.



3. Problem: You've got a shrub that's lop-sided.

Do use heading cuts to spur growth in the right direction. Unlike thinning cuts, which remove a branch, heading cuts shorten a branch down to a bud you want to encourage to branch out. Though it seems counterintuitive, pruning to prune the shorter side of a lop-sided shrub to stimulate growth and even it out. Position the pruner on the part of the stem you want to remove, just above a bud that will grow in the direction you want to encourage. **Don't** remove more than one-quarter of a stem's overall length in any single cut. For shrubs that are dramatically lop-sided, use thinning cuts to remove older wood from the longer side as well as heading cuts on the shorter side.

4. Problem: You've got an old shrub that's a woody, tangled mess.

Do give the plant an overhaul by thinning out the old wood over the course of three years, making room for all new growth. Starting at the base of the shrub, eliminate the canopies of branches, taking out no more than one-third of the shrub's total mass. New growth from the base should follow the next growing season. Remove another third of the old wood at the base in each of years two and three. By the end of year three, the shrub should be made up of entirely new, vigorous growth. **Don't** remove more than one-third of the shrub's branches at any one time. This preserves enough foliage that the plant can make sufficient food (through photosynthesis) to stay robust and generate new growth quickly.



Year 1
Remove one-third of the old wood from the base.



Year 2
A few prunings, light and air can reach the center of the plant.



Year 2 and 3
Remove another third of the old wood in each of the following years.



Year 3
All the old wood has been removed to make room for vigorous new growth.

5. You have a flowering evergreen shrub that's leggy at the bottom.

Do use your index finger and thumb to pinch off the end (or terminal) buds of new branches on rhododendrons, azaleas, Japanese pieris, mountain laurel, and other broad-leaved evergreens to encourage side branching on the lower part of the shrub. As with heading cut, manually removing the terminal leaf bud signals a dormant bud below it to grow, stimulating bushy side branching. This is also a way to control the shrub's overall size. **Don't** pinch off the flower buds in the process. These are the bigger, fatter buds at the ends of branches. ■



pro advice

LISA KOHN, NEWPORT, NY

"On shrubs that develop a lot of suckers at the base that turn into vigorous stems, such as forsythia and red-bud dogwood, be sure to prune out old wood each year to accommodate the new growth."

Colorful cottage kitchen

Vibrant paint and weathered wood create an eating and cooking area that looks comfortably lived in. Here's how to put together a similar space in your home

by JESSICA DOWELL FORDEN • Photography: DAVID SALLAGHER

The kitchen offers more than a place to chop veggies or cook a roast. In this house in Watercolor, Florida, the room acts as the ultimate family gathering spot, where grandkids cluster for snacks while parents play in their feet. To accommodate all the activity, homeowners Jim and Linda Serkland opted for well-worn antiques and rustic furniture that belie the space's relatively young age. "Even though we renovated only about eight years ago, we chose old furniture, old lights, and old art," says Jim, "so we don't worry if something gets messed up." Bright colors embrace the high-back vibe and draw attention to the room's custom pieces, including a wall-mounted plate rack and extra-long island. Inspired? Get cooking with these ideas for your own kitchen.



buffet lamp
Providing that look lighting's not just for your den; this polished-brass fixture adds extra illumination for kitchen occasions. \$254, bellacor.com

cabinet and trim paint

Cool tones pop against white walls. Nature Series Gloss in Indigo and Pea-Green cabinets and hardware. \$400-\$100 per can. \$50 per gallon. benjaminmoore.com

round stool

This simple seat makes room for one more at the table. Give it an aged look by sanding the wood then coating it with dark paint. Size: \$42, cuckooandcandle.com



striped fabric
Add some French flair to windows with café curtains stitched in durable cotton. \$3.99 per yard. kiva.com



retro drink mixer
Satisfy a thirst trend by whipping up iced drinks with this vintage-style chrome appliance. \$49, humblebrunch.com

enamelware coffee pot
Because it's designed for camping, this 16-cup grooved steel vessel is ultra-durable. \$23, gkincubators.com



bistro folding chair
Provides a classic design, made with lacquered steel, this eco-conscious steel frame looks just as good in the kitchen as it does on patios. \$26.60 for two, shopgardenofedens.com



painted plate rack
To match the buffet place at left, we selected this plate rack in a fiery red finish that brightens the island. Price tag, \$212, dinneronlywoodworks.com. Pick it up at: kiva.com (2014) \$38 per square. carpenterhouse.com



bridge faucet
This Victorian-style faucet from Glacier Bay looks elegant—and its high-tech makes filling large pots a breeze. \$284, homedepot.com



weathered farm table
The handsome industrial table from old timbers. This piece option is shown in a dark-stained finish and seats up to 12. \$4,195, kitchenconnection.com

what's your look?

Suggest your own look to us by emailing what'syourlook@kiva.com. Or, check out the full list at kiva.com/what'syourlook

Adding charm with bold color

Saturated shades on the main body pair up with deep accent tones and crisp trim to create a romantic new look. BY GREGG MARSHMAN • STYLING BY HOWARD CRITAL

Highly detailed Victorian-era houses like this one call for a few extra paint colors.



Pick your palette

Here are three very different color combinations, each offering a more vintage look.



BOLD VICTORIAN
Bath: a Plumblush (2)
Waterloo (2), Portland Cobble
(2), Hammered Nail (4),
Pebbled Pearl (1) and
Enderling Shell (3)



WHITE DETAILS
Benjamin Moore's White: gray
Tan (1), Power Buff (2), Coastal
Fog (2), Texas Leather (4),
Mountain Peak White (3)
and Coastal Fog (3)



EARTH TONES
Vintner's Pink Pewee (2), La
Fontaine/West Grass (2), Sea
Cavendish Amber (2), Hickory
Garden Oaks (4), Churchill
Mediterranean White (3), and
Chisel/Honey Nut (3)



[Detail]

"It's so hard to picture color as your house," says Melba Sink of Kent, Ohio, who lost with her husband, Gerald, in the Victorian era home built by his great-grandfather in 1879. To help, we enlisted architectural color consultant Amy Wax, who assembled three pigment-rich palettes to make full advantage of the house's architectural charm. "Purple was a popular color for Victorians, but I chose muted tones that wouldn't be too garish," Wax says. The darker plums on the first story grounds the narrow facade while providing a visual link to the second story. Gold, a complementary color, "enhances the quality of both purples," she says. Victorians probably would have used a third shade of gold for the trim, but Wax updated the look with a pearl white instead, giving the darker colors a crisp outline. The white adds a little fluff. As you can see at right, Wax offered up two second-down options, too. Overall, she says, the key is to combine colors of similar intensities. As for the purples, "blond" says Melba. "I would never have chosen those colors myself, but I love them."

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To get your first full prescription free and to see an inhaler, visit ADVAIR.com or call 1-800-328-5197.

ADVAIR DISKUS 250/50 is approved for adults with COPD, including chronic bronchitis, emphysema, or both. You should only take 1 inhalation of ADVAIR twice a day. Higher doses will not provide additional benefits.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION ABOUT ADVAIR DISKUS 250/50 FOR COPD:

- Do not use ADVAIR to treat sudden, severe symptoms of COPD. Always have a rescue inhaler available with you to treat sudden symptoms.
- Do not use ADVAIR DISKUS if you have severe allergy to milk proteins. Ask your doctor if you are not sure.
- Do not use ADVAIR more often than prescribed. Do not take ADVAIR with other medicines that contain long acting beta₂-agonists for any reason. Tell your doctor about medicines you take, and about all of your medical conditions.
- ADVAIR can cause serious side effects, including:
 - serious allergic reactions. Call your healthcare provider or get emergency medical care if you get any of the following symptoms of a serious allergic reaction: rash, hives, swelling of the face, mouth, and tongue, or breathing problems;
 - sudden breathing problems immediately after inhaling your medicine;
 - effects on heart: increased blood pressure, a fast and irregular heartbeat, chest pain;
 - effects on nervous system: tremor, nervousness, reduced adrenal function (may result in loss of energy);
 - changes in blood sugar, potassium, calcium levels or white blood cells;
 - serious and serious eye problems, and a higher chance of infections. You should avoid exposure to chemicals and measles, and, if exposed, consult your healthcare provider without delay. Worsening

of existing tuberculosis, fungal, bacterial, viral, or parasitic infections, or ocular herpes simplex may occur.

Lower bone mineral density. This may be a problem for people who already have a higher chance of low bone density (osteoporosis).

Eye problems including glaucoma and cataracts. You should have regular eye exams while using ADVAIR.

Common side effects of ADVAIR DISKUS 250/50 for COPD include: throat irritation, dry mouth, and throat fungal infection, headache, and viral infections, viral respiratory infections, headache, and muscle and bone pain.

¹Measured by a breathing test in people taking ADVAIR DISKUS 250/50 compared with people taking either Salbutamol or formoterol 200 mcg or salbutamol 400 mcg. You may feel very tired. It is not known how well ADVAIR DISKUS 250/50 works in COPD. Side effects may vary. See ADVAIR DISKUS 250/50 for COPD. You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch or call 1-800-FDA-1088. Please see Brief Summary of Important Safety Information about ADVAIR DISKUS on adjacent page.



ADVAIR DISKUS 250/50
Breathes you in. Works where the others don't.



ADVAIR GOLD

(Learn about Advair GOLD) BRIEF SUMMARY

This summary does not take the place of talking to your healthcare provider about your medical condition or treatment, the full prescribing information for complete product information.

What is this advertisement information I should know about ADVAIR GOLD?

ADVIR GOLD is used to treat asthma and COPD, including:

1. People with asthma who take long-acting beta-agonists (LABAs) including, such as salmeterol, without asthma maintenance therapy based on the increased risk of death from asthma problems. It is not known whether ADVAIR GOLD reduces the risk of death from asthma problems.
2. People with asthma who take LABAs without asthma maintenance therapy.

Call your healthcare provider if breathing problems remain even after you take ADVAIR GOLD. You may have different breathing:

3. Get emergency medical care if:
 - breathing problems worsen suddenly and
 - you use your inhaler when needed, but it does not relieve your breathing problems.

2. ADVIR GOLD should be used only if your healthcare provider decides that your asthma is not well controlled with a long-acting beta-agonist medicine, such as tiotropium.

3. When your asthma is well controlled, your healthcare provider may tell you to stop taking ADVAIR GOLD. Your healthcare provider will decide if you can stop. ADVIR GOLD should be used as directed. Your healthcare provider may prescribe a different inhaler device because you may not use it correctly.

4. Children and adolescents who take ADVIR GOLD may have an increased risk of being hospitalized for asthma problems.

What is ADVIR GOLD?

ADVIR GOLD contains an inhaled corticosteroid (corticosteroid), budesonide, and a long-acting beta-2-adrenergic agonist (LABA), formoterol. Inhaled corticosteroids help decrease inflammation of the lungs. Inhaled LABAs relax the large airways in the breathing system.

LABA medicines are used to people with asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), such as emphysema. Use the LABA medicine with caution for long-term use without medical supervision, such as wheezing and chest pain or tightness. These symptoms can happen when the LABA medicine is used without medical supervision. Use LABA medicine as directed, always, and stop taking LABA medicine when your doctor tells you to stop.

ADVIR GOLD is used to treat asthma and COPD. Your doctor:

1. ADVIR GOLD is used to treat asthma and COPD. Your doctor:

ADVIR GOLD is used to control symptoms of asthma and to prevent symptoms such as wheezing, a cough, and shortness of breath. ADVIR GOLD is used to prevent symptoms of asthma and to prevent symptoms of asthma and to prevent symptoms of asthma.

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ADVIR GOLD is used to control symptoms of asthma and to prevent symptoms of asthma and to prevent symptoms of asthma.

If you have a severe allergy to milk protein, ask your doctor if you are allergic.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking ADVIR GOLD?

Tell your healthcare provider about all of your health conditions, including:

- Heart heart problems
- Low blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Low blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Low blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Low blood pressure

• Any medical or surgical conditions, including:

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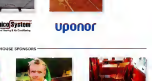
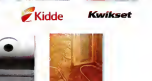
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interiors

One living room, four great designs

Good bones may define a room, but finishing touches give it style or, in the case of this space, different styles—from classic to contemporary. **by JESSICA DODGE TERRY**

Blending personal taste with good features can be daunting—and terrifically satisfying. Just check out the living setups on the following pages. One room, furnished with basics—a beige upholstered sofa, a leather armchair, wood carpeting, and an architecturally minded—takes on four distinct looks, thanks to creative combinations of colors, textures, and accent pieces. Classic with class? Yup, that's shown here, at right. Classic with current punch color? That's on the fourth page. You want more? Read on for other ways to remodel a room without even lifting a hammer.



The starting point: Classic timeless, durable staples and you'll have a solid foundation for any decor scheme.



Even flowerwood becomes a focal point when accessorized with a pretty woven basket.

1. Classic with class
A few unexpected touches—only introduced with leather upholstery—take the classic to this understated space.

2. Textured curtains
When the room is simple, the curtains offer privacy while maintaining the room's easy feel.

3. Simple throw pillows
Whether striped, textured, or solid in color, these throw pillows bring a touch of color to the room.

4. Sculptural table lamp
A modern lamp with a curved, sculptural base adds a touch of contemporary style.

5. Upholstered ottoman
A classic ottoman with a leather finish adds a touch of luxury to the room.

Home

Charmingly casual

A lighthearted array of stripes and florals freshens up the earth tones in this laid-back arrangement.



1. playful patterned walls

The pale yellow of the walls is brightened by the playful pattern of the wallpaper.

2. striped curtains

The blue and white stripes of the curtains help to tie the room's color palette together.

3. pretty throw pillows

Various colors and patterns of the throw pillows add to the room's visual interest.

4. chunky table lamp

A slightly rustic glass lamp base adds to the room's casual feel.

5. angular coffee table

Colorful and angular, the table's design ensures that this well-proportioned sofa will never go out of style. A basket underneath smartly adds storage.

style it

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Softly sophisticated. Perch down beside a nightstand from the proven palette of lavender and lavender and lavender.

1. pretty pale walls. Add a shell of subtle color by painting walls the same hue as your accessories—but three or four shades lighter.

2. botanical print textiles. Scatter across upholstered and throw pillows, ferns and acorn motifs bring out alternative to lavender. Lighter purple pillows keep in the room's color palette together.

3. streamlined table design. A slender, metal-shaped table gives this room a modern look.

4. sleek accent tables. The straight, forward-looking and glossy chrome finish of the dining and coffee tables help ground the otherwise airy space.

5. big bloom arrangement. Introduce a bit of elegance with a large, dramatic floral arrangement.



interiors

Bold and bright. Rich, saturated color on walls and to classic looks this relaxed space takes on a new look.

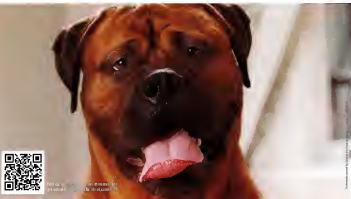
1. jewel-toned walls. The room's highest-impact design choice is also one of the simplest: a rich, saturated shade of purple.

2. diamond-style textiles. A subtle, sparkling pattern of diamonds brings a touch of glamour to the room's design.

3. metallic table design. A slender, metal-shaped table gives this room a modern look.

4. sleek accent tables. The straight, forward-looking and glossy chrome finish of the dining and coffee tables help ground the otherwise airy space.

5. big bloom arrangement. Introduce a bit of elegance with a large, dramatic floral arrangement.



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salvage
style

Vintage electric lanterns

Hung as a front entry or a cozy corner indoors, these pendant-style fixtures cast a soft ambient light that's both charming and inviting. *by AMY R. FOXEBS* Photographs by KRISTINE LARSEN

Many hanging lanterns from the first half of the 20th century were humble by design, looking as if they'd been crafted by blacksmiths rather than machines.

Dugling from unadorned cast-iron, brass, or copper cases often had insouciant marks, grill-work, even riveted square accents—of those on medieval knights' armor. And fitted with earth-toned frosted- or textured-glass panels, these warm glow complemented the curtness of the Craftsman bungalows, Tudor cottages, and even modern Colonial Revival homes in which they were most frequently hung.

Popularized by manufacturers of the time, such as Gustav Seckley and the Rogerscraft craftsmen, these rustic lanterns exemplified a look-to-basics design sensibility. They were the antithesis of late-19th-century Victorian chandeliers cast from glimmering brass, with highly ornamented enmeshed arms.

Though lanterns were sometimes hung indoors as a foyer, study, or



STEP-BY-STEP

Rewire an all-weather lantern

When a friend asked for help finding a replacement for the modern flush-mount fixture that used to light the entry to her 1930s cottage (below), I set out in search of a vintage hanging lantern that would better complement her home's architecture. I picked up a mid-century painted steel lantern with amber glass panels in need of TLC for \$89 at my local salvage mall. Similar restored lanterns cost about \$250. I then called the pros at Grand Brass Lamp Parts (grandbrass.com), one of the few remaining manufacturers of reproduction antique lighting parts, to order the wires, exterior-grade socket assembly, chain, and decorative ceiling canopy I needed to get the old lantern looking good and glowing again.

Cost: \$110 for the lantern, \$40 for the replacement parts
Time: 1 hour
Difficulty: Simple. Just peek at our wire-stripping tips and you'll already have the tool.

Shop smart: Find unrefined lanterns with frosted or tinted glass panels for as little as \$50 or \$60 at eBay or at flea markets. Higher-quality ready-to-install lanterns, such as the green stained-glass one above, from [danishlightshop.com](http://www.danishlightshop.com), start at \$250.

second-floor stair hall, they were most widely used outdoors to illuminate a home's entry.

That's because before the advent of electricity, portable candle or oil lanterns were hung just front beside the door to guide the way from house to barn or carriage, says Ed Sullivan, historian for Rejuvenation, which sells antique and reproduction lighting. "They had this inherent quality of welcoming you to a place that the late, hanging electric versions also share."

Today, you can serve guests to "come on in" by putting back into service a vintage lantern like the amber glass one that I scored at a salvage mall (see case, right). To keep costs down, search for a lantern that you can clean up and rewire yourself. It's an easy job once you get the parts. Read on to learn my favorite sources for DIY lighting, where supplies and for the how-to on turning an "as is" bargain lantern into a showstopper for your doorway. ■

what do you salvage?

Heavy is how I rewired this old lantern, and I thought how are the materials better than the old one? I found the answer in the old one.



1. Assemble the socket housing. Thread one end of a hollow-core screw (see recipe) onto the metal cap that comes with your porcelain socket. Tighten through the cap screw. Slip the brass socket housing over the other end of the screw, as shown.



5. Fit the socket in the housing. Insert the cord through the socket's supplied insulation ring and through the screw and hanging loop. Secure the socket to its metal cap by tightening the small screws inside the socket.

2. Secure the housing and ground wire to the fixture by inserting the protruding end of the screw into the hole at the top of the fixture. Slip the ground wire's ring over the screw and fold an overlapping loop.



6. Attach one end of the chain to the hanging loop on the lantern and the other end to the loop attached to the ceiling canopy (not shown). Use pliers to open and close the links.

3. Prep the wires. Rubber-insulated lamp cord comprises two wires joined at the center. Split them apart, and use a wire stripper to strip 1/2 inch of insulation from each, revealing bare copper.



7. Thread the cord and ground wire through the chain and into the canopy's hollow screw that connects to the fixture's mounting hardware. Follow up with the lantern (learn how at blackhouse.com/home) and admire its radiance.

4. Connect the wires. First check the insulation. The neutral wire that wraps around the socket's silver screwless ridges. The hot wire, which goes on the brass screws, is smooth. Wind the wires clockwise and tighten the screws.



get the parts list
For the supplies you need to make this lantern, see the list on page 100.



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Go for the bold

With an updated open floor plan, a rich color palette, and vibrant textiles, the latest TOH TV project house goes from dark and dreary to bright and cheerful.

by KATH FARDOLZ and DEBORAH BROGDAN • Photographs by ANTHONY TIGHE



(before)

BEFORE: Stained and by pine around the fireplace looked heavy and dark. TOP: Red walls add a bright touch after a dynamic backdrop for the revamped living room.

Remodeling is no task for the faint-hearted—especially if you've barely lived in your house before taking the plunge. Take a five-track turntable-wielding Allison and Robert Sharma, owners of the home *The Old House TV* project, just five blocks beyond their 1940 Colonial Revival in Ashmont, Massachusetts; the couple asked their architect for ideas on updating it. Shortly more than a year later, they're living in the sunny, colorful home of their dreams, courtesy of the TOH TV crew and a design team that re-designed and improved upon the couple's vision. To get there, they took down walls, added windows, and went over willing to ditch some original details. "Many folks shy away from doing this, but it's better to replace or rebuild when old materials aren't of high quality or if the original design interferes with a sensible floor plan," says TOH general contractor Tom Silva. Based on cover how daring decisions like these paid off.

TOH TV
AUGUST 2012
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DINING ROOM: KATH FARDOLZ
KITCHEN: KATH FARDOLZ
BATH: KATH FARDOLZ
BEDROOM: KATH FARDOLZ
PATIO: KATH FARDOLZ



Playing with color Purple walls and a vivid rug add personality to the bump-out entryway (above), but they're not overwhelming. "It can be a challenge to use different colors in adjacent floor plans without making the house look cartoonish," says Melissa Duffy, the project's senior designer. Sticking with warm, deep tones did the trick, as seen in the photo at left, where a red brick/masonry wall meets the powder room's wall. "These shades complement each other yet make the spaces feel distinct."

Short windows, tall walls
The sunroom flows seamlessly into the living room's dining area, and a new desk provides extra living space to maximize after-school.

— addition



THIS HOME
1,700 sq. ft. **Prattville, Ala.**
OWNER: **Tracy and David**
DESIGNER: **Tracy and David**
CONSTRUCTION: **Tracy and David**

DESIGNER'S NOTE
The sunroom flows seamlessly into the living room's dining area, and a new desk provides extra living space to maximize after-school.



A tidy dining spot The table (above) is in the same place, but the artwork opening to the kitchen was widened and made square to bring two traffic flows between these two areas. "The dining room table is now centered in the opening, which makes for a much better layout," says Allen.

For cooks and eaters The old kitchen was not too far from the front of the house (below), but the old one was a little better (above) (left) and (right). A new island (above) (left) and (right) adds a lot of space and makes the island more functional. "The new island is a great place to prep and cook on the same side and a covered breakfast nook on the other side," Allen says. "Having a nook is a great place to eat and it helps them work efficiently," says David Vanecko, the project's kitchen designer. A nook was built under the countertop (below) behind Allen in the photo below) lets the kids eat on the island without crowding. The white color scheme is warm and tropical, with a chocolate brown, red bar stools, and a coordinating window treatment.



THEIR FAVORITE
FEATURES
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Pieces to gather was the living room and sunroom, which is a combination space (LEFT) the Thomases love for a 10-year-old son and his two daughters. "We're casual people. The open floor plan really suits us, and we love how the sunlight pours in here," says Brown.

A bright spot The old sunroom (RIGHT) behind the living room at the Charles River had a view of the deep and looking out at the river. It was a great comfortable place to hang out. In its place now is a larger sunroom that opens onto the deck (BELOW). Walls of windows and a view that connects from the deck to the backyard add a welcome connection between inside and out.



THOMAS FAMILY
 William, 10
 Emily, 8
 Sophia, 6
 Thomas, 10
 Architectural: Upson

NEW DESIGNING
 The Thomases
 moved to the
 new house in
 2008. They
 moved to the
 new house in
 2008. They
 moved to the
 new house in
 2008. They

EXTERIOR DESIGN
 William, 10
 Emily, 8
 Sophia, 6
 Thomas, 10
 Architectural: Upson



(Before)

Yes, this is a basement Once dominated by a windowed porch (BEFORE), the walk-out basement is deep and below the surface, now features a TV screen and a room for playing games and holding a party (BELOW). The outdoor area is relaxed from the dining room and beyond.



(Before)



A big curb-appeal boost The existing house is a lot from the inside work (BEFORE). Architect Harriet Christine has suggested a people (RIGHT) to achieve speed and it is a pleasure to the new exterior entry. A small window above it also highlights this feature. The front porch is a classic red color scheme, with a red door that fits all the living spaces beyond it.



(Before)



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Install a Lincrusta wainscot

The textured, tough-wearing wall covering has stood the test of time
By STEVEN SCHWARTZMAN • Photographs by KYLE SMITH

Whether installed in grand old mansions, bars or barns, Lincrusta has long been a popular addition to upscale homes, including well-known examples like the White House and the John D. Rockefeller Center. Discovered in England in 1777, Lincrusta first made the scene when used as a decorative finish of wood paneling, and only occasional products in solid linoleum or paper have appeared on the surface. Lincrusta is a durable and durable-looking, it's available in a wide range of styles, from the hallway to the bathroom, or the kitchen. Follow along as master regional editor Mark Forster installs Lincrusta panels and gets the job done.



For complete instructions, turn the page.



Cost: About \$40 per linear foot
Time: 15 hours over three days
Difficulty: Moderate. You'll need to be precise (and patient) when making cuts and matching seams.

For more information on Lincrusta, visit www.lincrusta.com. For more information on the show, visit www.thisoldhouse.com.

Day-to-day timeline

FRIDAY Lay out the placement of the panels and affix the liner to the walls.

SATURDAY Cut and install the panels and prepare them for painting.

SUNDAY Prime, seal and light the panels, and attach the chair rail.

tools

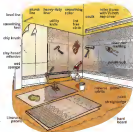
4-foot level
panel
breakaway utility knife with extra blades
metal ruler or straightedge
smoothing tool for liner
smoothing roller for panels
4-inch chip brush for adhesives

2x4-inch angled post-and-rail
notch frame with 1/4-inch neoprene
sponge
piece of hardboard that's at least
1 inch taller than the molding
caulk gun
utility pluggers
rubber saw and power saw
brad-nailer gun for chair rail

materials

kraft paper
painter's tape
ink line cloth
heavy-duty wallpaper liner
premixed vinyl wallpaper adhesive
easy-bleed adhesive for panels
colorless mineral spirits

latex gloves
vinyl or acrylic adhesive caulk
universal acrylic primer under
latex paint
Seton eggshell base color
and smaller light-to-dark
2-inch-wide, wood-filled,
and fine-grit sandpaper for chair rail



1

1. Lay out the panels and install the liner

A. Stick a level line and create a layout. Remove receptacles and protect doors with kraft paper. Measuring from the baseboard, use a pencil to mark the top edge of the material that will sit below the chair rail. With a level, transfer this line around the room. The top surface of the panels will follow this level line, ensuring they they will hang plumb. Next, just below the level line, use a pencil to mark where the sides of the panels will fall during installation. Shift the placement left or right as needed so that the panels you'll cut fit at corners or around obstacles as best as possible. Then, make these marks. This makes matching the seams easier.

B. Affix the liner to the walls. Measure the length of one wall and add 4 inches. Cut a strip of liner to this length. (You'll need to wrap it if the wall is taller than the liner is wide, as ours was.) Brush adhesive onto the back of the first strip. To help the paper soften, look at the wallpaper adhesive instructions for brushing. Once set, place the liner on the wall, aligning its top edge with the level line and centering it horizontally so that there are 2 inches of excess at each end. Finish smoothing the liner with the roller to remove air bubbles, moving from the center outward. Place the second strip below the first, butting up to the first. Repeat for the remaining walls. Allow to dry overnight.

Tip To help you determine the panel layout, use a length of neoprene or scrap wood as a stand-in to see how the panels will stand at the corners.



2. Prep the panels

A. Cut the first panel to size. You'll position the first panel out of a corner or around a baseboard, such as a door casing. Use the level line as a guide to mark where the side of the first panel will fit. Next, measure the baseboard area from the plumb line back to the corner or molding at the top and bottom. Transfer these measurements to the panel, marking with a sharp dry-cut edge with the plumb line and the edge you will cut with the corner or molding. Use a utility knife to make a straight-edge cut of the panel to size.

B. Wet the backs of the panels. Use a sponge soaked in warm water to wet the back of the first panel. (There should be enough water on the surface so that it would double if it dries.) The panel set at an angle. (It's good for the remaining panels for the first wall.) Lay the panels back to back, with the wet side facing touching, and set them aside for 20 to 30 minutes. This will allow the material to expand slightly before installation, preventing the panels from buckling if the seams once they're in place.



3. Install the first panel

A. Apply adhesive. Wipe excess water from the back of the panel with a clean, dry cloth. Smear the easy-bleed adhesive with a brush on the back of the panel, applying it more liberally at the edges.

B. Place the panel. Align the top edge of the panel with the level line and press it into place. The factory-cut edge should sit on the plumb line. The edge you cut should abut the corner or molding.

C. Remove air bubbles. Use the smoothing roller to get rid of bubbles beneath the panel, working from the center outward. Trim the edges and use a roller around the perimeter to ensure, using cloth to follow any small imperfections, remove excess adhesive, and flatten out the panel to the wall.

see how
it's done
how to
install
the
panels
with
this
guide



Tip To minimize surface cracks, don't bend or flex the liner or the panels any more than shown here. Small cracks and imperfections can be filled later with caulk paint will hide them even further.

4. Cut the bottom to fit

- A. Mark the cut line.** Use a pencil to mark the height of the baseboard on the side of the panel.
- B. Slice away the excess.** Slide a piece of hardboard behind the base of the panel, resting it against the wall as shown to create a handy, free cutting surface. Align the bottom edge of the straightedge with the marks on each side of the panel. Use a utility knife with a fresh blade to score and cut the material on the waste side. Press the bottom edge of the panel onto the wall and smooth it down with the roller and a clean, damp cloth.
- C. Install the additional panels.** To fit the last panel of a run into the corner, repeat the procedure for measuring, cutting, and applying, as in Step 3A.



Tip If you don't have a piece of hardboard handy, use a kitchen cutting board as a backup instead.

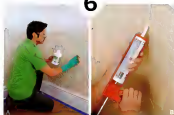
5



5. Finish installing the panels

- A. Turn the corner.** Measure the width of the last installed panel. Transfer this measurement to a plumb line adjacent to the wall on the last wall run. Only remove as much material as necessary to position the cut on the plumb line, from the piece holding the utility knife at a 45-degree angle. This bevel will take down the cut-off's high tail and allow it to tuck into the corner, making a tight seam with the adjacent wall.
- B. Put up the remaining panels.** Keep installing panels as described. To make sure all moldings measure from the level line and plumb-edge of the last panel installed, transfer those marks to the next panel, and carefully cut away the material. Allow the installed panels to dry for 24 hours.

6



6. Prep the panels for paint

- A. Clean the panels.** Wearing safety goggles and rubber gloves, use a lint-free cloth dampened with odorless mineral spirits to degrease each panel. Follow with a dry cloth to wipe the panels clean and allow them to dry thoroughly.
- B. Fill the corners and joints.** Run a thin bead of caulk in the corner seams along the baseboard and at each seam between the panels. You can apply a small amount to fill gaps, cracks, or imperfections on the panels themselves. Use a clean, damp cloth to smooth the caulk and wipe away any excess.

7. Paint and finish the wainscot

- A. Apply the primer and paint.** Tape off cuttings with painter's tape if needed. Use a roller with a 1/4-inch nap cover to apply primer, sealer, then roll on the base color. Use a paintbrush to smooth the finish and carefully cut in along the edges.
- B. Add the highlights.** Do a wet-in-wet job of the highlighting color, then let it on a cloth until it is nearly dry. Lightly edge the brush over the slightly firmer areas of the panels. Use a clean, damp cloth to wipe away any stray brush marks on the base color as you work.
- C. Install the molding.** Cut the chair rail and install it above the panels by nailing it into studs along the level line. For full instructions on installing the chair rail, visit houseandhome.com/bonus. Fill the nail holes and sand, prime, and paint the chair rail.



7

what have you built?

Your weekend remodel appears in our quarterly "What Have You Built?" issue. Photographs by houseandhome.com/yourYHB





- 1 **A welcoming walk**
Winding through garden beds is going straight to the street, so a border stone path can make the stroll to your door look and feel like an event.
- 2 **Leaf-littering**
This adds splashes of color and natural textures that create a soothing, first impression of your house from the street.
- 3 **A covered entry**
Peg up a tiny porch or awning to keep wind-blown leaves and rain off the door. The shelter can act like an architectural embrace.
- 4 **Shapely shrubs**
Keep a laurel, boxwood, shrub, or a mossy specimen in top condition to add exotic drama, and pinch to give your house a unique style.
- 5 **A refined look**
Whether wood shakes, shingles, or metal, shingles make sure your roof's exterior matches the style of the house.
- 6 **Star openings**
Grab a window with shutters and flower boxes around windows and shutters, or a screen or a sign for your door.

IN FARM & DISCOUNT

Here at This Old House, we believe that a handsome front facade starts right up there with a solid foundation and good bones.

Sure, there's the satisfaction you get in showing passers-by that yes indeed you've got a gem on your hands. But more important, it's about how appealing details such as cherry blossoms, a crisp white fence and eye-catching shutters create a welcome sight for you and your family to come home to each day.

On the following pages see nine stunning exterior transformations, including some from fellow owners whose homes were among the worst-looking in their neighborhoods. Through smart investments and often, *venet equit*, their diamonds-in-the-rough soon caught up to—and even surpassed—the rest of the block. Read on to see how these is done, as well as other inspiring homeowners did it.

THE THERAPYJOURNAL.COM March 2002

Focus on the details

The "stalewart" on the front gable and the elegant fish-scale shingles enliven neighbor Makolm Brendo and Aaron Burt to buy this 1886 Stick style house in upstate New York. But the monotone paint scheme (BEFORE) had the details from anyone checking more than 5 feet from the facade. The gleamed off front porch also made for an unimpressive entry.

Paint—A two-color palette new highlights the home's architecture. Pale yellow on the fish scale shingles and two on the stoopsteps below and on the front gable distinguishes the theme of siding. Two shades of green make the trim and shingles stand out, while dark cranberry accents add pops of seasonal color.

Entry—Working off old photos, the co-owners rebuilt the porch adding a color-friendly design of the original lattice railing. Other touches include a beadboard ceiling, turned porch posts, and gingerbread corner brackets.

Roofing—New asphalt shingles with gradient color make cedar shakes and preserve the home's traditional style at an affordable price.



Restore a historic palette

The 1870s San Francisco house's distinct architectural features were lost in a wash of white (BEFORE). Veteran painter Ben Buckler helped bring them to life by painting with a modern take on the historic palette of earthy greens, browns, and blues.

Paint—Five new colors enliven the facade. Gray brown on the body sets off trim in white trim. A soft green highlights the projecting bays and surrounds the recessed porch roof under the eaves and second-story windows. The gable moldings are dark green and the nooks to color. "Such accent colors are like Tabasco sauce. Sprinkle just a couple of drops or you'll lose good taste," says Buckler.

Roof—Two coats of charcoal-colored acrylic paint were rolled onto the worn cedar roof shingles. In addition to tying into the new color palette, the paint added as many as three more years to the life of the roof.

PHOTOS: GARY HARRIS AND MICHAEL HARRIS; DESIGN: GARY HARRIS



THE READER PROJECT

Spruce up with a porch and new siding

Before homeowner Scott Wisner got his hands on it, this 1990s Colonial Revival in Old Lyme, Connecticut, sported a "bunker grade" with vinyl siding, a slab style steel entry door, and a dull concrete stoop (BEFORE). His improvements added character where there was none.

Siding—A new blue door with leads from the driveway to an 8-foot-deep porch, where Scott now enjoys his evening coffee. Despite the PVC clad wood porch posts and AZEK railings, no more rapid repainting and no chemical need to only the occasional coat of a tank of white vinyl to preserve its rich color.

Roofing—Scott replaced the black vinyl siding with a cedar shake-style fiber cement on the second-story bays and the sides of the house. He used proper order clapping just on the portion of the facade that is sheltered by the porch. "From 5 feet back, you can't tell the difference between the two materials, but on the porch it adds to the home's traditional flavor."

Doors—A new wood door with carved panels and divided light windows creates vintage appeal. Its brushed steel hardware coordinates with the sconces that flank the door and the house number on the porch post.

Windows—New energy-efficient double-hung replace the drifty originals. For a more substantial look, Scott built out the first-floor linens with AZEK trim.



TQM READER PROJECT



[before]

Make a red-carpet entrance

This farmhouse in Hanover, Maryland, had been in Kenneth Sereno's family since 1944. But by the time Kenneth inherited it, the town was a dirt pit and the home's exterior a shell of its former self (BEFORE).

With a bit of sensibility and a lot of sweat equity, he not only restored the home's old splendor but also added new sparkle. **Landscaping:** A new brick hard-paver path has a rumpled Dutch flat in an appropriately aged look. Like artwork on white walls, layers of primery and bright blooms—in the foundation, in planters at the base of the porch, and in hanging baskets—add welcome doses of color.

Entry: A new white railing defines the borders of the rebuilt porch and gently redirects the foot, giving the space distinct tonal shade of PVC. They require little maintenance.

Siding: Kenneth replaced dingy asbestos-fiber clipboards with bright white vinyl that shines from the street.

Roof: New gray asphalt shingles replaced raking cedar shakes, creating a well-groomed and watertight topper for the house.

Door: Kenneth built the pane door himself. Its carved double lights and bright red hue draw the eye to the entry.

Windows: Double-paned light double-hung replacements keep weather at bay. Mount black shutters frame the window openings and add punch to the facade.



TQM READER PROJECT



[before]

Refresh the front

When Greg Corner bought this 1951 Cape Cod, its black-and-white color scheme made a forgettable first impression (BEFORE). He gave it a statement with cheery plants and paint.

Landscaping: Replacing dreary reds and oranges with bright blue and purple adds cheer. A mid-century Japanese maple adds three-season color. Subsequent garden pots set off the walkway.

Siding: Grays pulled back the old ivory to reveal tightly buffed red cedar shingles. They needed only a good cleaning and a few patches to prep them for paint.

Paint: A shabby gray body color recedes behind the white trim, creating depth and de-emphasizing the home's boxy shape. Blue paint on the new salvaged shutters and on the window boxes highlights these architectural accents.

Entry: A fiber-glass columnne places a pair of unremarkable lattice panels, making the porch a focal point. Greg stained a new low-maintenance fiberglass door to resemble natural wood and addition entry handle set and knobs, both in a rubbed bronze to cap off the classic look.



[before]

Liven up the landscape

Without any garden beds or colors other than green, this Cape Cod (BEFORE) detracted from this home's curb appeal. By reimagining the landscape and finishing up the paint, the owners of this new Colonial cottage have new reason to smile each time they pull into the driveway.

Landscaping: By clustering plants with similar colors, the homeowners unannounced their impact with lush waves of cherry, rose, purple and red. Curving flower beds follow the line of the existing walk, retaining walls and swings out from the garage, and they soften the look of the stark straight concrete walkway. By planting both sides of the driveway, the homeowners unclaimed a portion of their property that is obviously supposed to belong to the neighbors.

Paint: Hard-black paint on the shutters was traded for a garden-friendly green hue that complements the soft gray siding. A vibrant orange door echoes the thought flowers on the front yard garden.



[before]



[before]

Clean up a charmer

When Joe and Betty Lambright moved into this early-2000s folk Victorian, it's 1,100 sq ft was so overgrown that part of the house was hidden (BEFORE). By clearing away the brush, they revealed a pretty front porch, new glass windows, and a brass-tipped front door.

Landscaping: In place of the birches and a tree that was blocking the house, the Lambrights planted flower beds filled with azaleas, other shrubs, and clematis. Using annuals allows Joe and Betty to rotate in new colors and shapes, constantly refreshing their home's exterior.

Entry: After demolishing a rickety wheelchair ramp, the Lambrights began rehabbing the front porch. Its floor was rotted, but they preserved the original posts and rail spindles. They refaced the concrete steps with century-old salvaged bricks.

Paint: A pale green body color rejuvenates the old wood lap siding. Rich red paint on the window sashes and shutters makes them pop within their creamy white casings. Staggered sanding and varnishing the original window takes center stage.

Roof: Century-bronze architectural asphalt shingles, which are thicker and more textured than the standard three-tab type, replace worn green ones.



[after]

TO
READER
PROJECT

Make more with less

A two-story porch with a massive plate glass window made this suburban 1963 Minneapolis home look like a Midwestern paragon. Wanting a more traditional aesthetic, the new homeowners swapped out the top details for ones with more elegant Craftsman styling.

Entry: The lowering porch came down as low as a statted pedestal that allows sunlight to filter through arched windows above the door. By widening the first-story roof line, the homeowners gained a porch.

Siding: A double-wide carriage door with divided light windows and recessed, paneled turned end posts create a focal point. The extended roof line is accented with a decorative bracket on one side.

Windows: Recovering the keyholes above the front entry windows softened the look of the fronts. A new pair of second-story windows creates symmetry with the existing windows above the porch.



[after]



[after]

Reorient the entry

Bulky shrubs, outsize columns, and an awkward side entrance to the porch obscured the front of this 1909 Colonial Revival in Minneapolis, putting the focus on the driveway (BEFORE). Working with local architecture firm Sherwell Design & Company, the homeowners opened up the entry, making it the focal point.

Entry: An arched porch narrows around the side of the house opposite the driveway, shifting attention to an area formerly hidden by privacy. Paved porch posts flank wide stone steps that lead from a new walkway to the front door.

Siding: The homeowners kept the original cedar lap siding, with sparsely wide boards on the first story and narrow ones on the second. It's a graduated effect that draws the eye all the way up to the dramatic dormer window punctuating the attic. Sure, paint, a traditional color for Colonial Revivals, protects the siding and boosts the home's curb appeal.

Windows: Two pairs of casements on the second story replace the log-cabin combination of transoms on one side and two on the other. An oval accent window centered between the casements creates symmetry with the dormer directly above it. ■



[before]

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Unseen from the street,
a seamless addition allows
a Victorian-era house
to gain more light, better flow,
and a family-friendly
open plan



inside job

by Deborah Baldwin

photographs by Ken Gutmaker
produced by Calista Saunders
styling by Sarah Allen

Sometimes the very things that make a home irresistible can also make it hard to live with. Consider the Queen Anne purchased here. In 2004, more than a century after it was built, its formal rooms and period details still beguiled, attracting the attention of a couple in search of a well-preserved Victorian. But when the operative word in formal and the time is now, there is bound to be a rub. After years of living with a dark kitchen, a tiny master bedroom, and no place for friends and family to gather spontaneously, the couple—parents of two now ages 6 and 11, and frequent hosts of first-flowering, two-generation parties—longed to bring the house up-to-date.

They live in just where to begin, in back, where the Queen Anne's spirit shined visibly. Indeed, when the house was up in 1896—the first ever built near San Francisco's Presidio—it proudly faced the street while turning its back on its sunny yard. Subsequent owners converted rear porches into rooms with few windows.

"Oh yes, the classic San Francisco house has a disconnection to the ground," says architect Aleck Wilson, who was brought in to help mold the house into the 21st century. That's especially true, he explains, when the front facade presents two stories and the back floor, with the rear exit one level below



GARAGE REBORN The Queen Anne's spirited backlot. Onset, approach to new matched by an equally spirited addition at the rear of the house. The new kitchen and great room marry 19th-century detail with 21st-century flow and function. As a pro work area sat 18th by a second island was designed to evoke woodwork in the older, formal rooms at the front of the house.



the front door, as was the case here. A staircase connected the two floors, but it was dark and cramped, and anyone who did any housework and out back found the yard convenient not by a garden but by a three-car garage.

As Wilson started the house, however, he was struck by its Victorian verve, right down to the boy's fire-guard guardrail and work, an 1870s substitute for more expensive redwood. Unlike many city dwellings, the house was detached, bringing in light on both sides and providing room for a narrow drive to the garage. He also noted that although the first floor had better-than-average flow—in the husband's point of view, "every room had two ways in and out, which is great for parties"—it was missing a key component of contemporary living: a friendly social kitchen at

the center where everyone wants to spend time.

Wilson soon realized he could greatly extend and widen the house in back, adding enough room on each floor to create that missing piece, as well as a family room for watching TV and a proper master suite. Lots of plans would bring light into the back of the house, and opening woodwork meant he'd be old and new together. "The owners wanted a new-world layout but with old-world detail," says Wilson, who began making an inventory of existing architectural elements that could be reinforced and repurposed.

Though known for his contemporary work, Wilson has a soft spot for historic buildings and a deft touch with period details. "He is able to create a warm feeling while being light," says the husband, who

floor plans

The Q750 Queen Anne had a well-preserved front, but the back of the house was dark and dysfunctional. The addition, which involved digging down 2½ feet, opened the house to the breezes and made room for a large kitchen and great room with the family semi-detached. On the top floor (not shown), the master suite was gained space and a dedicated entry.



A desk alcove with a **lowered ceiling** defines it as a workstation while keeping it a part of the room.



well-defined, distinct spaces within the open-plan into the small, hermeticness of the front of the house. The resulting (open) is defined by perimeter a that are really placed in ceiling cutters. On another wall (right), the desk alcove is tucked into a recess where the chimney once stood. Further set off by a dropped ceiling, the alcove allows kids to do homework without other people's upbeats.

learned about him through friends and liked what he saw in Wilson's eclectic portfolio.

The architect sums up his mission in this case as "taking an old house with beautiful formal rooms and adding a clean addition."

First off, the freestanding garage had to go, allowing the yard to unfold like a plush carpet. Wilson then proposed digging down 30 inches in back to have enough height for a comfortable family room that would open onto a patio stepped down from the rest of the yard. Above the family room would be a kitchen and great room and a deck, that connecting the back of the house to the outside on two levels.

Alongside the family room, there was just enough room to squeeze in a one-car garage. "Luckily they had that driveway," says Joe Singleton, who served to project superintendent for the general contractor, Plath & Company. "It means we could get an excavator and a Bobcat back there."

Soon, however, his workers encountered a sharp reminder of where they were: on land that was close enough to the ocean to have once been dunes. To prevent mud from filling the hole as quickly as they required it, they shored up the sides with plywood and moved quickly to pour footings.

Another reminder of the setting was winter winds, where the original builders had added masonry for the chimney with what was close at hand. The salty sand proved corrosive. The chimney had to be removed brick by brick. Much easier was adding the back of the house, where two porches had been cobbled onto



dark and light
In the original dining room (above), the room's lighting fixture became a more dramatic focal point after the tile surround was restored. The brown walls and white woodwork merge the foyer's color scheme (left), creating a transition to the new rooms.



Painting some of the old and all of the new woodwork white helped blur the line between the two.

inside and out
Invisibly from the street, the new addition (above) brings bright, airy light through oversized windows and French doors, and creates a link to the backyard that is reinforced by the deck off the kitchen and the patio off the family room (below). The gas fireplace is a direct vent unit.



year-round rooms. "It was a very clean cut," Singleton says. "We just tore them off."

Once the steel demand addition went up, the challenge was to finish the new spaces so "really fit with the feeling of the front of the house," says the boss. Drawing from a bag of visual tricks, Wilson created distinct spaces with period styling within the open plan, including a reading nook where kids and guests can retreat while staying within the owner's old Wisconsin, classic built-in, and a coffered ceiling also help blend old and new.

Today, the family "really lives in the new spaces," says Wilson. "And as the kids are now adults, they can spend more time downstairs independently but not so far away—there's a new open staircase."

But the true test was a party the homeowners held for their children's school. "There must have been 80 people there, half of them kids," Wilson recalls. "For traffic flowed from the front of the house to the back, then downstairs and up—plenty of opportunity to gather spontaneously in rooms, clusters, and groups. It's a modern way of entertaining—and living—and exactly what the homeowners had hoped for all along."

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The pros at *This Old House* help you tackle your to-do list

52

DIY fixes for your home's most annoying little ailments

(Yup, that's one for every weekend)

Caring for a home is more like a marathon than a 100-yard dash. Trying to sprint through myriad repairs in the days before you host a dinner party or the in-laws come for a visit only leads to frustration. And, like a winded runner dropping out of a race early, you won't finish. But if you pace yourself, taking on just one project a weekend, you'll always be working with fresh legs. Thanks to the following quick and clever solutions to 52 of your home's most nagging problems, you'll be moving on to more relaxing weekend pursuits in as little as 5 minutes.

By Josh Gerschlager
Photographs by Lee Spierke



1 Chairs are wearing away the floor finish, and felt stickers work better in both directions. Hammer 'in' tacks with attached felt pads for dining chairs or anything you move around a lot, or rubber pads for sofas and stuff that stays put.

→ finishes and furniture

2. A new handle is missing your wallpaper job. It's a little less than 2 inch round and you don't feel any difference such as a paint chip. You can forgo the standard procedure of slicing and dicing the paper and brushing it off the handle. Instead, use a syringe (55¢ at paint stores) to poke a hole that releases the air and allows you to inject adhesive right where it's needed. To get a clean cut in vinyl paper, make a small slit with a utility knife before inserting the syringe.

3. Plaster walls look rough fresh or semi-gloss paint rather than usual eggshell. The ultra flat stain helps hide imperfections in the surface any amount of glossiness reflects light and highlights unevenness.

4. Old picture holes are still giving black dots. Don't holes with a lightweight patching compound. Once dry, smooth with a damp sponge. Unlike with sandpaper, there's no dust and no damage to the wall paint.

5. The cupboard door won't stay shut. The old spring or roller latch is worn out or covered with paint. Order a heavy-duty magnet catch (\$4, Rockler.com) and install it in just a couple of minutes. Works great for medicine chests, too.

6. Scratches are ruining the look of woodwork. Hide marks in furniture, trim and floors using blurring markers (\$5 each, various colors at hardware stores). They provide instant stain application.

> windows and doors

7. A double-hung sash cord has snapped. Pop out the old pulleys and use spring-loaded replacement with a retractable steel tape that disassembles the cord for both cords and weights. (Standard balances start at \$39 per pair; pulleyrunner.com) Watch a video of TDI contractor Tom Davis installing the pulley system at thinkhouse.com/bonus

8. Window sash locks don't align. If the meeting on the front sash doesn't drop low enough to fit flush with the rear one, the problem may be that the upper sash was painted shut without being pushed fully against the top pinb. To release it, put the paint sash down with window openers

9. It takes super hero strength to move the sliding patio door. Chances are debris has jammed the wheels. Retrieve the operable door by turning the adjustment screws at the bottom, then clean the wheels and tracks, and spray with silicone lubricant. Get detailed steps for a sliding door tune-up at thinkhouse.com/bonus

10 Your screens are ripped or rusty. The hard part of screen replacement is figuring out the size of the spline that holds it in the frame. Make it easy by measuring the old rubber gasket using an architect's template (\$6, staples.com). The plastic rule has holes that correspond with common spline diameters represented in decimals of an inch, such as .125 and .175.

11. A casement window's crank is stripped or jammed. You could open the crank cover and attempt an repair, but it's easier and usually more effective to replace the hardware. Select the right crank for your window size and model at twose.com

12. A door swings open or closed on its own. Pull out one of the hinge pins, lay it on a sturdy work surface, and hit the midpoint of the shaft with a hammer. Then reinsert the pin. The blow will have bent it slightly, providing enough resistance to prevent the unwanted movement.

13. Painted hinges look bad and are poorly aligned. Leave the door hanging and use two opposing rubber doorstops or wood shims set on the floor to stabilize it. Remove one hinge at a time and strip the hardware. Learn how to safely remove paint without chemicals using an old slow cooker at thinkhouse.com/bonus

14. A vintage window pane is cracked. Standard replacement glass won't match the way look of the original panes, so you can either swap in a piece from the back of the house or order a historic reproduction from besthistorians.com. For the how-to on replacing a pane, see thinkhouse.com/bonus

15. Paint on the door is sticking to the finish on the stop. This "bleeding" can occur when you close a door before the paint has fully dried. Apply wax to temporarily hinder adhesion. To fix, sand around the door edges and repaint using 100 percent acrylic latex with good block adhesion.

> yard, house exterior, and basement

17. The gne digs across the lawn. Pickup Stanley's anti sag kit (\$11, lawns.com). Run its cut-to-length cable from the bottom of the latch side to the top of the hinge side. Two lighter-duty center turnbuckle to alternate the drag.

14 A window rattles in the wind. The sash lock's cam mechanism is misaligned or broken. To suck a double-hung's sashes together and eliminate rattling—and drafts—remove the center latch and install two new ones inside. Arrange them so that the latches are fully engaged when the cam is turned about halfway.



19. Releveler slides from the gutter like a waterfowl. The body of the releveler is clogged with dirt. Flush with water then use the hook end of a coat hanger to dislodge any remaining clumps. If that doesn't work, go at it with a hand-cranked pipe snake.

20. Little cracks in the driveway appear each year. That obscures water gets inside the fissures and freezes, pressing against the surface. Come spring, dig out any infiltrating oil, salt, and dirt, and fill the cracks for good. For asphalt, use a cold pour filler such as CRACKfill Cold Filler (\$12 at lawns.com); for concrete, use Quikrete Concrete Crack Seal (\$10 at hardware.com), then seal the whole driveway.

21. Grass along the walkway refuses to die during big rains. Sweep your old perennials for permeable areas, such as those

made by Eco-Stone. Pores in the surface or special drains between pavers allow water to move through the material and the compacted stone and sand below, preventing washouts.

22. The lawn is turning brown. This is often due to insufficient watering. An easy way to tell if your lawn is thirsty before it's too late is to look at it through perforated sunglasses. If it appears like gray instead of green when it's in direct sunlight, turn on the sprinklers.

23. The blades on your porch siding fan are drooping. Even all-weather fan blades can eventually lose their rigidity after years out in the humidity. Besides looking bad, this can cause the fan to wobble. But you don't need a new fan—just order a replacement blade set from fannys.com

24. The tree-wool rope is rubbing away bark. Replacing the

18 The entry set's deadbolt sticks when you key-in. The lock needs lubrication, but not with oil, which can attract dirt over time. Squeeze dry graphite powder to lube the lock without creating future gunk-ups. And while you've got the tube handy, give any other squeaky hinges or sticking locks around the house a squeeze too.

wool rope runs that go all the way through the limb and are secured with a washer and nut. Drilling into the limb is less damaging than wrapping a rope around it.

25. Horizontalers lead to water in the basement. Odds are your gutters are dumping their loads too close to the foundation. Extending ledgers at the bottom of downspouts are tripping hazards. To route the water underground using Plasti-Fit is easy to install dry wall (\$150 includes corner braces and installation instructions).

26. You always forget to turn off the basement light. Screw a First Alert's socket motion detector (\$30, motion.com) into the fixture and leave the wall switch in the up position. The light will illuminate as soon as anyone approaches. Then automatically turn itself off. The device is also handy in closets and stairs.

27. A crack in the foundation lets in moisture and pesky critters. You could fill the fissure with hydraulic cement, but it will split open again as the foundation shifts. A more durable and flexible solution is to use epoxy-injection, such as Polyseal Concrete Repair Kit (\$75, www.polyseal.com). Learn how to make the repair at thinkhouse.com/bonus



28 The finish has faded from your fence. You don't need to buy a fancy paint sprayer. A \$13 landscape pump sprayer makes easy work of the job.





33

Your stainless steel is covered with watermarks. Forget about pricey products specifically designed for stainless, and grab your WD-40 from the utility closet. It will remove and repair fingerprints, watermarks, and stains. Just be sure to wipe away excess with a cloth.

34. The grout is cracking in the tiled shower. This can be due to house settling or grout that was never sealed, allowing water to get in and break it down. Scrape out the old grout and replace it with Duxtek Tite-Color premixed grout (\$7.95 for a 9-pound bucket; sears.com), which contains urethane to make it more flexible and eliminate the need for sealing.

35. Laminate kitchen countertop edge banding is peeling. Brush contact cement on both the laminate and the substrate, and let it dry. Then press the laminate in place and let it dry. If it's still peeling, use blue painter's tape.

37. Your beloved vintage medicine chest mirror barely meets a reflection. Remove the glass from the cabinet door, stop the old silvering from the back, and use a silvering kit to make it shine again. Just take note: This is an exciting job and supplies aren't cheap (\$176, smelting.com).

38. The grout is stained around the sink. You can remove stains by bleaching with a grout gel, but that can leave the grout color uneven. Hide that problem by darkening all the grout with a grout colorant in a soft gray or beige hue.

> kitchen and bath

29. The butcher block smells like garlic. To sanitize a wood countertop, wash with a solution of 1 teaspoon of bleach in 1 quart of water. To eliminate odors, pour coarse coarse salt onto the surface and scrub it into the wood using the face of a kitchen knife.

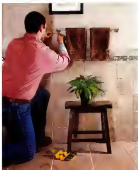
30. The mirror fogging when you take a shower. Treat it with Rain-X anti-fog spray (\$4 at auto supply shops), which creates a moisture-repellent coating.

31. Your toilet racks. If tightening the bolts on the base doesn't stop it, buy some plastic shims from a hardware store and slide them under the toilet to stabilize it.

32. You're tired of flashing the neighbors. Rather than leave the bathroom blinds closed at all times, apply an attractive window film (\$7.95 to \$12.95 per roll, enough for two windows, 2me.com). It'll create privacy without blocking natural light.

36

A towel rack is loose. Only the most meticulous homeowners save the little hex keys that come with their hardware. So buy yourself a \$13 Allen wrench set. Before tightening the set screw, remove it and apply a dab of Loctite Threadlocker Blue 242 (\$6, homedepot.com), which will hold it in place—without preventing removal later on.



28. The bathtub caulk is leaky. You've got to remove every bit of old grout so that the new material forms a seal against the tub and tile. Frodo's got back those moldy bathroom tiles. Use a 5/16-in. flat end of a putty knife to get it out, and caulk remover loosens any remaining bits. Then apply new acrylic latex caulk containing mildewcides.

40. The heat vent under the tile floor warms up too slowly. Connect the radiator preprogrammable thermostat so that the first person awake in the morning doesn't get cold feet.

41. There are mildew spots on the bathroom ceiling. Replace the wall switch for your exhaust fan with a mechanical timer and set it to stay on for 30 to 60 minutes each day every shower.

> electrical and plumbing

42. Your two-prong outlets won't accept plugs for new electronics. If you have full-size (not half-prong) systems, have this metal wrapped wiring, the sheathing can provide a ground, allowing you to swap in three-prong outlets. But that only works if your home's electrical system is grounded. To be safe, just swap the outlet for a GFCI one.

43. A single-lever faucet is dripping. Turn off the water and remove the faucet from the sink. Then smear Vaseline on the O-ring and replace the faucet. This is a tip-o'-the-hat, but it'll stop the drip until you get a new O-ring—or an entire faucet.

44. You're always fumbling in the dark. If there's a switched outlet in the room and an unswitched one for a table

lamp, install a GFI where the switch (GFI switches only) has a neoprene dust cap, plug in an outlet to remove the fuse, a plug, and a battery-powered switch that buttons to the wall.

45. A radiator isn't getting hot. Paint or rust may be blocking the bleed valve. Trying to fix it with a radiator key usually just breaks the key, which is made of soft metal. Instead, use needle-nose pliers to gently work the valve back and forth until open. Then lubricate the paint, so as to let the radiator fill with hot water again.

46. A compression faucet has a slow drip. With the water shut off, open the faucet completely, tighten the valve assembly by nut, then close the faucet again. This will realign the valve so that it will close fully.

47. The wall outlet shifts when you plug in your coffee maker. This happens when the outlet isn't anchored tightly between the electrical box and the cover plate. Lock it in place using plastic electrical outlet spacers (\$3 at hardware stores) that work like shims to bring the outlet flush with the wall.

48. The toilet is running. Call Kenley Toilet Repair's Rapper Finder hotline (800-528-3953) for technical service. Read them your model number from inside the tank, and they'll send you



50

The light hums when it's dimmed. Dimmers work by flickering lights on and off so fast that we perceive less illumination, but that can cause the filament to vibrate. Upgrade to rough service bulbs, which have stronger filament supports. Find them at the lightbulb store next.

all the replacement parts and instruct you how you need to stop the gurgling.

51. Water pipes bang when the washer kicks on and off at the start of each cycle. Install pipe hangers along the supply lines in the basement to secure any loose sections. Wrap pipes in insulation where they penetrate floors or walls.

52. A set of ganged light switches isn't wiring with the cover. Loosening the screws shifting the switches, and tightening the screws is doing it the hard way. Just place a flathead screwdriver against the attachment knob of the switch you want to adjust and rotate lightly with a hairline.



> 49

A switch cover keeps coming loose. Get longer cover screws at the home center. For ones in decorative finishes, such as the antiqued bronze screws shown here, try kyledesigns.com.

ALL ABOUT

Garage doors

No longer an afterthought, they're stronger, more weathertight, and brimming with character. The experts at This Old House help you pick a new garage door to complement your home. **By Jim Gorman**

Move over, front door, the garage door has become America's favorite entryway. For better or worse, we're more likely to go in and out of our homes with the click of a remote than the turn of a key.

Unlike the detached one-car structures found at the end of driveways 50 years ago, today's two- and three-bay garages are wholly integrated into the home's footprint. They occupy a prominent chunk of prime visual real estate as well: about 33 percent of average street-side facade. Yet, for many years garage doors remained stuck in the Dodge Dart era, just blank slabs of stamped steel or painted plywood.

That began to change about 10 years ago as custom manufacturers began adding carriage-house-door details, such as X-shaped braces and decorative hardware, to real the hinges and handles used on entry doors. It was a design revolution that has since filtered down to home centers, where you can now get decorative garage doors in wood, steel, fiberglass, vinyl—even glass—to match almost any architectural style, including ones that predate the turn.

So if your garage is due for a face lift, cool on fad fashions like the night-dove type, material, and lock for your house and budget. It's an upgrade you'll appreciate with every click of that remote.

Anatomy of a garage door
An exterior view of the most common variety: roll-up steel doors.



Special Roll-Up doors and two-kind styles give this roll-up sectional garage door the look of a carriage house door, and still keep it secure. Double to about 1,000 lbs. in weight. \$2,000. www.thisoldhouse.com

VITALS

What's it cost?

For steel and wood the two most popular materials, expect to pay \$250 to \$2,500 and \$1,000 to \$10,000 respectively. Prices don't include installation.

DIY or hire a pro?

While some homeowners will attempt to install a garage door themselves, installation can be dangerous and should be left to pros.



How long will they last?

Garage doors are typically made of steel or wood. Steel doors can last 30 years or more, while wood doors can last 10 to 20 years.

How much care?

It depends on the material and the exposure to the elements. Wood requires regular painting to prevent decay. Steel only needs repainting if it rusts. Fiberglass and vinyl can be painted if they take glass needs only an occasional washing. Here's a pro to inspect the mechanical parts annually.

Material matters

A door's appearance, cost, durability and energy efficiency depend on what it's made of.

Metal Strong, long-lasting and virtually maintenance-free, steel is the most popular option and comes in a wide variety of designs. More likely to rust in seaside locations. Look for dent-resistant 24-gauge sections. Aluminum is light and doesn't rust, but isn't strong. Foams insulated doors can have R values as high as 17. Prices range from \$250 to \$2,500.

Wood Offers the widest selection of styles, shapes, and decorative add-ons. Paint-grade doors often use engineered woods and wood-plank boards. Stain-grade doors are built of solid stock. Requires the most maintenance. Can be insulated to R-30. With prices up to \$10,000, wood is usually the most costly option.

Fiberglass or vinyl Fiberglass can look like painted or stained wood, but itself is heavy, won't decay, and doesn't dent or rust like steel. Vinyl doors have a stiff frame, so that provides good insulation. Design options for other materials are limited. Colors are subject to fading, but these doors can be repainted or stained. Good near the seashore, but they may crack in cold weather. Both can be insulated to R-12. Fiberglass starts at \$1,500, vinyl at \$1,600.

Composite Cellulose fibers fused with resins create a material that won't rot, warp, or rot like wood, or rust or dent like metal. Each section has air vents open for stiffness and insulation. This low-maintenance material is also used as trim over wood and steel doors. Can be insulated to R-9. Prices start around \$1,800.

Glass Panels of tempered glass (or a tough plastic) mounted on a vinyl or steel aluminum frame fill garages with light. Choose clear, frosted or opaque single-paneled double-pane panels. Wood-clad frames are also available. Because of their weight, glass doors require heavy-duty springs. The R value for single-pane glass is a minimal 1.5; double-pane glazing is R-4. Pricing is similar to composite doors.

TYPES OF DOORS

IT'S ALL ABOUT HOW THEY MOVE. MOST GO UP AND DOWN, BUT YOU CAN ALSO GET GARAGE DOORS THAT SWING, SLIDE, OR FOLD.



SECTIONAL

The most popular type, these doors have horizontal-ridged sections that are rolled straight up and then back along the garage ceiling, often assisted by a torsion-balanced horizontal coil spring. One- to two-piece doors can raise a door weighing as much as 1,000 pounds and opening 20 feet. Built-in weatherstripping seals out the elements.



SWING OUT

These doors hang from hinges on either side of the opening. To avoid sagging, each door must be well-lifted and should be at least 1 foot taller than it is wide. Best for mild climates because snow or ice will prevent them from opening. Can be operated manually or with a special remote control. Good at sealing out the weather.



SLIDING

Like barn doors, these hang from rollers that ride along a track at the top of the opening. Doors hang into any bays left open, so they can't be used to seal out the weather. Operate in either direction manually or with a remote. Track length is about twice the door width. This is the best weathering of garage doors.



BIFOLD

Like closet doors, pairs of rigid vertical sections fold back against the sides of the opening. Sections aren't as heavy as swing-out doors and don't extend out as far, but they can't be used to seal out the weather. Must be operated manually or with a remote. Operate in either direction manually or with a remote. Can be used as lightly as swing-out or sectional doors.

Get the right look

New design options make it easier than ever to pick a garage door that fits with your home's style.

TRADITIONAL

Looking like a barn with a pitched roof, this door is made with the stabled columns, divided-light windows, and a few colorful elements. Shown: Marthas Vineyard Heritage Classic model C003C sectional, starting at \$1,900. marthasvineyard.com



TRADITIONAL

Wood work, five doors with divided-light windows and hand-painted panels have the look of a Victorian-era cottage. Shown: Marthas Vineyard Heritage Classic model C003C sectional, insulated with foam insulation, starting at \$1,900. marthasvineyard.com

CHAPEL

A few low-color schemes highlight the vertical shapes popular in the Arts and Crafts style of the 1920s. Shown: Clostron-Goldman model C042 sectional, insulated steel with composite weatherstripping, \$1,400. clostron.com

TRADITIONAL



MODERN

Less than a dozen, hand-painted, and distressed finishes, shown in Shown: Spanish Colonial-style vinyl doors. Shown: Marthas Vineyard Clostron-Goldman model C003C sectional in steel, \$1,400. marthasvineyard.com



MODERN

It's perfect for the modernist. This hand-painted glass door is reminiscent of a Japanese sliding screen. Shown: Clostron-Goldman model C042 sectional, insulated steel with composite weatherstripping, \$1,400. clostron.com



TRADITIONAL

This traditional style, with its gently arched, curved panels, adds to an already relaxed setting. Shown: Clostron-Goldman model C042 sectional, insulated steel with composite weatherstripping, \$1,400. clostron.com



1. 4-11-2019 2. 11-11-2019 3. 18-11-2019 4. 25-11-2019 5. 2-12-2019 6. 9-12-2019 7. 16-12-2019 8. 23-12-2019 9. 30-12-2019 10. 6-1-2020 11. 13-1-2020 12. 20-1-2020 13. 27-1-2020 14. 3-2-2020 15. 10-2-2020 16. 17-2-2020 17. 24-2-2020 18. 3-3-2020 19. 10-3-2020 20. 17-3-2020 21. 24-3-2020 22. 31-3-2020 23. 7-4-2020 24. 14-4-2020 25. 21-4-2020 26. 28-4-2020 27. 5-5-2020 28. 12-5-2020 29. 19-5-2020 30. 26-5-2020 31. 2-6-2020 32. 9-6-2020 33. 16-6-2020 34. 23-6-2020 35. 30-6-2020 36. 7-7-2020 37. 14-7-2020 38. 21-7-2020 39. 28-7-2020 40. 4-8-2020 41. 11-8-2020 42. 18-8-2020 43. 25-8-2020 44. 1-9-2020 45. 8-9-2020 46. 15-9-2020 47. 22-9-2020 48. 29-9-2020 49. 6-10-2020 50. 13-10-2020 51. 20-10-2020 52. 27-10-2020 53. 3-11-2020 54. 10-11-2020 55. 17-11-2020 56. 24-11-2020 57. 1-12-2020 58. 8-12-2020 59. 15-12-2020 60. 22-12-2020 61. 29-12-2020 62. 5-1-2021 63. 12-1-2021 64. 19-1-2021 65. 26-1-2021 66. 2-2-2021 67. 9-2-2021 68. 16-2-2021 69. 23-2-2021 70. 3-3-2021 71. 10-3-2021 72. 17-3-2021 73. 24-3-2021 74. 31-3-2021 75. 7-4-2021 76. 14-4-2021 77. 21-4-2021 78. 28-4-2021 79. 5-5-2021 80. 12-5-2021 81. 19-5-2021 82. 26-5-2021 83. 2-6-2021 84. 9-6-2021 85. 16-6-2021 86. 23-6-2021 87. 30-6-2021 88. 7-7-2021 89. 14-7-2021 90. 21-7-2021 91. 28-7-2021 92. 4-8-2021 93. 11-8-2021 94. 18-8-2021 95. 25-8-2021 96. 1-9-2021 97. 8-9-2021 98. 15-9-2021 99. 22-9-2021 100. 29-9-2021 101. 6-10-2021 102. 13-10-2021 103. 20-10-2021 104. 27-10-2021 105. 3-11-2021 106. 10-11-2021 107. 17-11-2021 108. 24-11-2021 109. 1-12-2021 110. 8-12-2021 111. 15-12-2021 112. 22-12-2021 113. 29-12-2021 114. 5-1-2022 115. 12-1-2022 116. 19-1-2022 117. 26-1-2022 118. 2-2-2022 119. 9-2-2022 120. 16-2-2022 121. 23-2-2022 122. 3-3-2022 123. 10-3-2022 124. 17-3-2022 125. 24-3-2022 126. 31-3-2022 127. 7-4-2022 128. 14-4-2022 129. 21-4-2022 130. 28-4-2022 131. 5-5-2022 132. 12-5-2022 133. 19-5-2022 134. 26-5-2022 135. 2-6-2022 136. 9-6-2022 137. 16-6-2022 138. 23-6-2022 139. 30-6-2022 140. 7-7-2022 141. 14-7-2022 142. 21-7-2022 143. 28-7-2022 144. 4-8-2022 145. 11-8-2022 146. 18-8-2022 147. 25-8-2022 148. 1-9-2022 149. 8-9-2022 150. 15-9-2022 151. 22-9-2022 152. 29-9-2022 153. 6-10-2022 154. 13-10-2022 155. 20-10-2022 156. 27-10-2022 157. 3-11-2022 158. 10-11-2022 159. 17-11-2022 160. 24-11-2022 161. 1-12-2022 162. 8-12-2022 163. 15-12-2022 164. 22-12-2022 165. 29-12-2022 166. 5-1-2023 167. 12-1-2023 168. 19-1-2023 169. 26-1-2023 170. 2-2-2023 171. 9-2-2023 172. 16-2-2023 173. 23-2-2023 174. 3-3-2023 175. 10-3-2023 176. 17-3-2023 177. 24-3-2023 178. 31-3-2023 179. 7-4-2023 180. 14-4-2023 181. 21-4-2023 182. 28-4-2023 183. 5-5-2023 184. 12-5-2023 185. 19-5-2023 186. 26-5-2023 187. 2-6-2023 188. 9-6-2023 189. 16-6-2023 190. 23-6-2023 191. 30-6-2023 192. 7-7-2023 193. 14-7-2023 194. 21-7-2023 195. 28-7-2023 196. 4-8-2023 197. 11-8-2023 198. 18-8-2023 199. 25-8-2023 200. 1-9-2023 201. 8-9-2023 202. 15-9-2023 203. 22-9-2023 204. 29-9-2023 205. 6-10-2023 206. 13-10-2023 207. 20-10-2023 208. 27-10-2023 209. 3-11-2023 210. 10-11-2023 211. 17-11-2023 212. 24-11-2023 213. 1-12-2023 214. 8-12-2023 215. 15-12-2023 216. 22-12-2023 217. 29-12-2023 218. 5-1-2024 219. 12-1-2024 220. 19-1-2024 221. 26-1-2024 222. 2-2-2024 223. 9-2-2024 224. 16-2-2024 225. 23-2-2024 226. 3-3-2024 227. 10-3-2024 228. 17-3-2024 229. 24-3-2024 230. 31-3-2024 231. 7-4-2024 232. 14-4-2024 233. 21-4-2024 234. 28-4-2024 235. 5-5-2024 236. 12-5-2024 237. 19-5-2024 238. 26-5-2024 239. 2-6-2024 240. 9-6-2024 241. 16-6-2024 242. 23-6-2024 243. 30-6-2024 244. 7-7-2024 245. 14-7-2024 246. 21-7-2024 247. 28-7-2024 248. 4-8-2024 249. 11-8-2024 250. 18-8-2024 251. 25-8-2024 252. 1-9-2024 253. 8-9-2024 254. 15-9-2024 255. 22-9-2024 256. 29-9-2024 257. 6-10-2024 258. 13-10-2024 259. 20-10-2024 260. 27-10-2024 261. 3-11-2024 262. 10-11-2024 263. 17-11-2024 264. 24-11-2024 265. 1-12-2024 266. 8-12-2024 267. 15-12-2024 268. 22-12-2024 269. 29-12-2024 270. 5-1-2025 271. 12-1-2025 272. 19-1-2025 273. 26-1-2025 274. 2-2-2025 275. 9-2-2025 276. 16-2-2025 277. 23-2-2025 278. 3-3-2025 279. 10-3-2025 280. 17-3-2025 281. 24-3-2025

Our cast of veteran experts

TOM SILVA
General ContractorNORM LACHANCE
Master CarpenterMIKE AND BILL HEWITT
Plumbing and Heating ExpertsROGER COOK
Landscape ContractorKEVIN CONROY
Pro

Q Can you give us some advice about replacing our existing steel entry door with an old wood door? Also, should we install a storm door to protect it?

—PATRICIA W. BRIDGES, FORT MYERS, FLA.



Tom Silva replies: Finding an old door in good condition can take time because you want one that suits the style of your house and is the right size and swing direction.

The first thing to check is the thickness of the existing door. You don't want your "new" door to be any thicker than that. If it is, you'll have to either replace the jamb and possibly the threshold as well, and that's a big job.

Next, measure the existing door's height and width. Your wood door can be as much as 1 inch taller and 1/2 inch wider, it's not hard to trim down. You should be able to take 1/2 inch off the top rail and 1/4 inch off the bottom rail without compromising the joints between the stile and rail.

If you have to trim the door's width, make your cut only on the hinge-side stile. Otherwise you'll have to reposition the door's lockset. Even if the stile doesn't need to be trimmed, you'll probably have to fill and rescribe the mortise on the jamb to match up with the old door's hinges.

Norm Lachance and Tom Silva get ready to trim a wood entry door to fit its new opening. Any cuts to adjust width should be made on the hinge side to avoid having to refit the lockset on the door's stile side.

A wood door that's smaller than the existing opening can be widened by 1/2 inch or so and lengthened up to 4 inches by tacking strips of wood to the door's edges. When you do that to a door, you'll need to hold the added pieces under a coat of putty. Finally, you'll almost certainly have to replace your weatherstripping. The type used on steel doors is often neoprene, which doesn't seal well against wood.

Once you find the right entry door, then yes, you should get a storm door. It will protect the wood from the weather and save energy.

HIDING FLOOR GAPS

The floating laminate floor in our hallway keeps pulling away from the threshold it butts into at one end of the hall, leaving an unsightly gap. What can we do to prevent this from happening?

—PAUL DUNN, PERRIS, CALIF.

Norm Lachance replies: You can't do anything to prevent your flooring from expanding and contracting. But you can help the movement by slipping the ends of the flooring into a notch, or rabbet, cut into the underside of a new threshold. The rabbet should be 1/2 inch deep and slightly higher than the thickness of the flooring so that it can move easily.

Because your flooring is already in place, pry up the old threshold and install a new one that's wide enough and thick enough to accommodate the rabbet. The flooring should probably sound over the rabbet about 1/2 inch, which would allow it to move without bending against the threshold or creating a gap. These are guidelines, make sure to use the actual expansion-gap dimensions specified by the flooring manufacturer.

WHAT IS IT?



A Bucket screen for paint rollers

B Clip-on step-ladder tray

C Detergent for gutters

D Or...

FOR THE ANSWER SEE PAGE 100



Foggy condensation between the panes of a double-glazed window indicates that the seal around the edges of the panes has failed. It's unsightly; the condition does not have a significant effect on a window's energy performance.

FAILED WINDOW SEALS

A contractor recently told us that on 20-year-old double-glazed windows Age "defective" because condensation is forming between the panes in some of them. Do slightly fogged windows really make a big difference in keeping you house warm?

—CONRAD LEBLANC, LAMBERT, ILL.

Kevin O'Connor replies: Unless the glass has cracked, it sounds as if the sealant around the edge of the two glass panes has failed and is allowing moisture to get in and condense on the inner surfaces. It's something that can happen to any double-glazed window.

Fortunately, in your case, it's merely a cosmetic issue, according to John Lewis of the National Preservation Bureau Council. "Seal failure does not greatly impact thermal performance," he says, "particularly in units without low-e coatings at a

gas-filled space." Yours are probably too old to have such upgrades.

Bottom line: A foggy pane or two will have no discernible effect on your heating bill. And if you want a clear view, you'll have to replace either the glass unit or the entire window. Your least expensive option—or the entire window.

REDIRECTING FLOOR VENTS

I have the perfect spot to build a window seat, with bookcases on each side. However, these built-ins would cover two air registers that are in the floor. What should I do about them?

—HELEN DORSEY, WILMINGTON, DEL.

Richard Trethewey replies: This is a common problem, but it's easy to solve, and you won't have to cut new holes into your hardwood floor. Here's a quick and inexpensive way to do it, if local codes allow.

Make the 4-inch-high platform that typically supports the cabinet door enough to completely surround the register. Tape the 4-inch-high blocking behind and beside each unit so that behind air will be directed inward the register in front. Crank the joints around the blocking with a tube of air-dry sealant, such as [RCDyn66 Mastic Liquidsealant.com](http://RCDyn66.MasticLiquidsealant.com), to prevent air from leaking to other areas under the cabinet. Order caulk to get brittle and crack in the heat. Cut a rectangular hole in the caulk to let air into the room, and convert each a modified air register.

While this technique was standard procedure for many years, local codes may require you to install vents (downside is that hot air doesn't contact the wood in heat). If that's the case, you'll need to remove the existing register and buy a rectangular 70-degree sheet-metal stock elbow, which sells at home centers for about \$6. The one you want is sometimes called a short-way elbow. A long-way elbow wouldn't fit in a register.

Secure one end to the existing duct work with sheet-metal screws or aluminum duct-sealing tape, then secure or tape the other end to the back side of the caulk. Make sure everything is sealed and secure before you install the cabinets, because you can't adjust the elbow afterward.

send your questions to ask the old house

go to asktheoldhouse.com
ask@oh or write to: Ask The Old House, The Old House Magazine, 136 West 50th St., New York, NY 10020

Questions require photos and/or drawings. Photos should be submitted by e-mail for clarity and length and may be used in future issues. Although the best interest of the reader is our concern, we are unable to reply to unpublished questions.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

I'd like to paint my kitchen, but I have to remove the wallpaper first. How do I do it?
—KATHY HORN TRUMBULL, CONN.

Rich O'Neil, painting contractor and owner, Masterwork Painting & Restoration, replies: Removing old wallpaper is an easy project for most homeowners and will surely do the trick. You just cannot get a clean-looking surface if you leave the paper in place and just

paint or new wallpaper over it. If you're lucky enough to have "scrapable" wallpaper, all you have to do is push a corner and peel off whole sheets. But if the paper sticks stubbornly to the wall, you'll have to dampen the surface with a commercial, enzyme-based wallpaper remover that breaks down the adhesive holding it to the wall. With a paper scraper, wallpaper will come off in large swaths, not bits and pieces, and before you know it the whole room will be a blank slate ready to be covered with the finish of your choice.

Q: Ask the Old House and materials
T: I have a house you can't remove 20% of the square foot of paper.
A: I think you're lucky. But maybe.

STEP BY STEP Strip wallpaper

1. Prep the walls

Start off the voltage power at the circuit breaker. Remove all electrical and switch plates on the wall and cover the opening with an electrical tape. Tape a plastic sheet to the top edge of the baseboards to protect the trim and floor. Roll a scoring tool over the paper in overlapping circles, making tiny cuts for the adhesive remover to penetrate. Aim for 10 perforations per square inch.



2. Dampen the wall

Following the directions on the bottle, mix wallpaper removing solvent (such as D-9) with an appropriate amount of hot water. You'll need about 2 gallons of solution to cover 100 square feet of wall. Pour the solution into a pump sprayer and spray the wall from the bottom up, letting the steam and setting. Work around the room three times. The paper should bubble in about 5 minutes.



3. Peel back the wallpaper

Use a scraper to pull the sharp corners of a metal putty knife into a 45-degree angle. Work the knife behind the paper a few inches where the paper is moist, and peel the paper down the wall. If paper sticks to the wall, soak it again before scraping. Place the stripped pieces in a garbage can so that you won't slip on them.



4. Scrape off the glue

Adhesive residue prevents new wallpaper from adhering and telegraphs through paint. Get rid of it by spraying a 3-foot section of wall with more remover solution and using the residue off with a putty knife or wide drywall taping knife.

5. Wash the wall

Immediately after scraping off the residue, wash the section clean with warm water and a sponge mop. Continue this way around the room until all the wall has been scraped and washed three times to be clean.

6. Test for trace adhesive

You can check for residual wallpaper adhesive by spraying the wall with a mix of 7 quart water and 1 ounce powder-boiler, which will turn any adhesive residue purple. Use denatured alcohol or salad oil to remove these spots. Let the walls dry for 24 hours, then seal them with an oil-based primer.



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Event Spotlight Auburndale Project Wraps



For its 20th season, The Old House TV hosted a one-of-a-kind, Crestline story, transforming a historic house along the famed Charles River into an extraordinary living laboratory with advanced ever views, an expanded kitchen and bright, bold interiors.



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The history: A lot of life was lived in this pink Folk Victorian farmhouse nestled among the rolling hills and meandering stone fence of rural Washington County, Kentucky. Built circa 1880, it's remembered mostly as home to the Yeast family, who lived here from the 1840s until Marie Yeast's death—at 104!—in 1990. Mrs. Yeast gave birth to her eight children here. The family raised cows and horses, and kept them out back in an old timber-frame barn, previous owner's uncle claimed tobacco there. After Mrs. Yeast's passing, the house sat empty until 2003, when it was sold to its current owner.

Why save it? The three-bedroom house is surrounded by historic stone fences thought to have been built by 18th-century Irish immigrants. Original interior details include board-and-batten doors, built-ins, and yellow poplar millwork.

What it needs: The only bathroom has been gutted but not the kitchen. The house needs an HVAC system and insulation. Whether to freshen up the pink paint or return the house to its original white is another call to order your call.

—KATHY HANCOCK



1. The house retains its original windows and most of the gingerbread accents on two of its three porches. 2. A photo of the house in 2002. 3. The house comes with about 15 acres attached to a barn. It is located approximately 40 miles from Lexington. 4. White-wet gravel, this living room is a beautiful view of the house right at home. 5. The kitchen is a working double range and double range, which is in need of repair.

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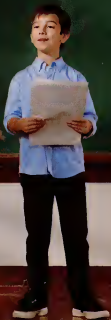
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